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Dipping not Baptizing:

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O R,  
THE AUTHOR'S OPINION  
O F T H E  
Subject, Mode, *and* Importance  
O F  
W A T E R - B A P T I S M,  
A C C O R D I N G T O T H E  
S C R I P T U R E S:

WHEREIN

DR. GILL's *Arguments* for the Mode of *Immersion*, and  
MR. BOOTH's for the *Importance* of it, as contained in  
his APOLOGY for the BAPTISTS, are principally  
considered:

WITH A FEW REMARKS ON SOME OTHER

B A P T I S T W R I T E R S,

N A M E L Y,

Mr. MARTIN, Mr. JENKINS, and Mr. McLEAN, who, in  
their several late PUBLICATIONS, seem to be strenuous  
ADVOCATES both for the *Mode* and *Importance* of it.

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B Y R. E L L I O T, A. B.

Formerly of BENNET COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

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*If any Man speak, let him speak as the Oracles of God, 1 Pet. iv.*  
*—Comparing Spiritual Things with Spiritual, 1 Cor. ii.*

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L O N D O N:

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THE AUTHOR'S OPINION  
WATERBURY  
T. J. B. S.



THE  
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## P R E F A C E.

To the CANDID and CHRISTIAN READER.

THE writer of the following sheets, hath often heard and beheld, with sorrow and concern, the bitter *strife* and unhappy *divisions* of many *professing christians*, about *divers* points in *religion*, not at all, as he conceives, essential to man's salvation, nor *profitable* to the church of Christ; and *that* of making *baptism* a BAR to communion at the Lord's table, is, in his opinion, none of the least. — Attempts indeed have been made again, and again; and that by some of the Baptists themselves, to break down this *new partition wall* of LEGALITY, (for so I conceive it to be) whereby Christ has been divided in his members, as though they were not *one* and the *same people*, built on the *same foundation*, and *heirs together* of the *grace of God*, and partakers of the *common faith* and *hope* of the gospel; but although those attempts to throw down this *dividing wall* between believers, in the church of Christ, has not met with the desired success, yet the very attempt to remove *occasions* of *strife*, and *discord* among brethren, is in itself *commendable*; and had they pursued this *amiable*

*object* of PEACE, according to *truth*, with a becoming *fortitude*, and *steadiness*; possibly they might have obtained what they so much desired, and sought for.—*Seek peace*, saith the scripture, and PURSUE it, until, if possible, the desirable object may be obtained by us :—but when Mr. Booth's *apology* came out, (which some supposed to be unanswerable) the *zeal* of those brethren of his, whom, in that *interesting* point, he strongly opposed, seemed greatly to abate, for I have not heard of their having *answered*, or taken the least notice of it.—Yet it is *good*, ALWAYS to be zealous in a *good cause*, provided it be according to *knowledge*, tempered with unfeigned *love* to the saints, and conducted with the *meekness of wisdom*; for if a man cannot *rule* and govern his *own spirit*, how can it be expected that he should *rule* or govern that of *another man's*.—This then is the GREAT OBJECT which I am aiming at and *pursuing* after, viz. *peace* with all the brethren in Christ, in a way of righteousness, to the glory of God, and the edification of his people—:and though but *little*, or no *success* may attend my feeble efforts, it is, I conceive, not only laudable in itself, but also right before God, to attempt, endeavour, and pray for it.—Now to obtain this end, I judged it needful to *examine* into the *grounds* and reasons of those points, which are considered and urged by the *contrary party*, as a *justifying cause* of their *separation*.—As one therefore *who*, I hope, *hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful*, and *grace*, to love all saints,

as such, for the *truth's* sake, which dwelleth in them.—I have (with *much* prayer to God, for the *light* and *aid* of his Spirit) attempted to shew my *opinion* of this matter, according to the scriptures.

My aim through the whole has been, not to make, but to heal breaches among real christians, not to *divide* and scatter *Christ's* sheep from the *fold* of his *church*, but to *unite* and keep them together, as sheep of the *same fold*, under their common Head and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is the Shepherd of us all.—But if any man count me a troubler of God's Israel, as Ahab did Elijah; I am content to bear that reproach till the Lord come; when I am persuaded, such a one, will be convinced of the error and evil of his rash judgment, in that he has spoken falsely of *persons* and *things*; which he has not known nor understood.—Let us beware of *prejudice*, for where that evil has once been admitted, and gotten possession of the heart, *truth* itself cannot enter; *self-conceit* and *prejudice* will not even *bear*, much less examine and try its doctrines by the holy scriptures.—Those are not imitators of the noble Bereans, who searched the scriptures daily, to know if what they had heard was agreeable to the scriptures or not, before they either *received* or *rejected* it; but such is the disposition and conduct I recommend to my readers; for I should be equally sorry, if its being an error they should receive it, or being the truth of scripture, they should reject it.—

A man



A man that truly fears God, seeks and desires above all things, to know the truth, even the truth as it is in Jesus, that he may walk in it; and to understand the will of God that he may do it: (and such alone are *truly sincere*, and *upright in heart* before God) will lay aside all prejudice, as much as possible, and act as Nathaniel did, and come and hear and judge for themselves; and of such it may be said, as it was of him, they are christians indeed, in whom is *no guile*; they seek not to please men, but God; these persons will not say, I have received the contrary opinion, and am satisfied with it, and will therefore take no more pains about it, for every wise man knows, that truth is more than a match for all opposing error, and never sustains any loss by being put to the trial; and though it may cost him some pains to engage in new combats, yet he is well repaid by the fresh victories he obtains over the error that opposes itself to him:—but those who cannot bear to have their opinion and practice opposed or examined, without much agitation and resentment at the opposition; plainly, I think, shew that what they have embraced is not the truth; or they have not well understood it, or, at least, are not established in it.

THE author has no design to set baptism aside, as an ordinance of Christ, yet he owns it is not clear to him how long it was to continue in the christian church, nor doth he see any warrant

rant from scripture to assert, it was intended to continue to the end of the world; this therefore he neither affirms nor denies.—It is not *unlawful* to baptize, because it is not *forbidden* in the divine word. Should any one therefore apply to him to be baptized, he would say, as Philip to the Eunuch, “If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest,” and upon his giving such a confession of faith in Christ, as *he* did, he would not scruple to baptize him; but he would not *urge* it on a believer, as *necessary* to salvation, or to church-communion,—*zeal* for *opinions*, &c. wherein *wise* and *good* men have differed, and do differ; is carefully to be distinguished, from a *godly zeal* for the *honor* of Christ, and the prosperity of his church.—Nothing is *essential* to *true faith*, *gospel holiness*, and *peace*, but what the Lord has plainly declared, and commanded in his word;—therefore all doctrines, opinions, &c. that depend on the reasonings, and authority of men, are merely human; and have nothing of God’s authority in them—they may be *right*, or they may be *wrong*,—try them by the scriptures.

PRIDE and covetousness are, I conceive, and ever have been; the two great occasions of all doctrinal errors, and contention in the churches of Christ.—Let us distinguish, as Paul did, between what is *plainly revealed*, and what is left *obscure*; perhaps to try the spirits and dispositions of  
men,

men, to make manifest what is in their hearts, &c.—With respect to the *former*, he says, not I speak, but the Lord; and in the *latter* case, he says, I speak, *not the Lord*. This, I conceive, strikes at the very root of dividing errors among the churches, and is a great part of that wisdom that is from above, which is first *pure*, then *peaceable*, *gentle*, and *easy* to be intreated, full of *mercy* and good fruits, without *partiality*, and without hypocrisy.

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E R R A T A.

Page 42. line 9. for *that*, read *true*.—P. 41. l. 1. dele *not*.  
 P. 47. l. 1. for xvi. read 16.—P. 89. l. 12. for *plunge*, read *plunging*.—P. 121. l. 10. for *λαττον*, read *λαττον*.—  
 P. 136. l. 27. transpose the words thus, *and that, for this plain reason*.



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## INTRODUCTION.

**T**O reconcile men to GOD, and to one another, in righteousness, by JESUS CHRIST; is evidently the great and glorious design of the gospel:—hence *faith* and *love*; whereby, this divine reconciliation is effected and maintained, through the Spirit; is often spoken of, in scripture, as the *sum* and *substance* both of *gospel-doctrine*, and *gospel-practice*.—That Christ, saith he, may dwell in your hearts by *faith*, Eph. iii. for, by *faith* ye stand, 2 Cor. i.—walk in *love*, for *love* is of God; and he that *loveth* his brother hath fulfilled the law, Rom. xiii.—hold fast, therefore, saith Paul to Timothy, the *form of sound words*, which thou hast heard of me, in *faith* and *love*, which is in Christ Jesus, 2 Tim. i. for, in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but *faith* which worketh by *love*, Gal. v. 6. and again; the apostle John saith, this is his (the Father's commandment) that we should *believe* on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and *love* one another, as he gave us commandment, 1 John iii. 23. and again; if we *love* one another, God dwelleth in us, and his

## 2 - INTRODUCTION.

*love is perfected in us*, 1 John iv. 12. Now from these, and such like texts of scripture, does it not plainly appear, that, *that Doctrine*, and *that discipline* in the christian church, which tends to produce, and maintain this pure evangelical *faith and love*, in the *hearts and lives* of men, is of God:—and, on the other hand; that *doctrine, order, or discipline*, which has a contrary tendency, is not of God?

Now if this be the teaching of the Holy Spirit, in the scriptures of truth; is it not manifest, that the *dividing tenets*, and *perplexing disputes* of some teachers; concerning the *mode of the existence of God*, or what is commonly called the doctrine of the *Trinity*? and also that of the *mode and importance of water-baptism*, (as absolutely necessary to be known and believed by all saints, in order to their communion here, and salvation hereafter;) is not the teaching and doctrine of God in his word; but the mere invention and teaching of mistaken and fallible men? and consequently ought not to be received, nor depended on by any, that make the scripture the only true and certain rule of their faith, and practice.

I HUMBLY conceive, therefore, that those who exclude any of their believing brethren from their communion, or refuse to admit them to the Lord's table, *merely* on account of their being of different sentiments on the *subject* or *mode*

*mode of baptism; or on any other point whatever, which the scripture hath not made absolutely necessary to salvation; such persons, I say, do not, in my opinion, walk charitably towards their brethren; nor act agreeable to the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.*

I CONCEIVE also, if christians received all believers, *as such*, (whose faith evidently works by love) without the least respect to their agreeing or disagreeing with them, in things *merely circumstantial* or non-essential (and *there is nothing*, in my opinion, *essential to salvation, but what the scripture has expressly declared so to be; nor is any thing essential to communion at the LORD'S TABLE, but what is also essential to salvation*) if, I say, all christian churches did heartily receive into their communion *all true believers*, such a practice would, I doubt not, greatly tend to promote the good of the church of Christ in general, and the edification of the several members of it, in particular; whereby all bitter contention and strife about carnal rites, ordinances, &c. would be effectually suppressed, and CHRIST EXALTED, and GOD glorified, *throughout all the churches of the saints*: and I am persuaded also, that such a mutual forbearance and condescension one towards another, in love; would, at the same time, be the most effectual means, and greatly blessed of God, to their being united in judgment, and *of one and the same mind, in the Lord*: and this, I think, the apostle plainly teaches, when he



## 4 INTRODUCTION

says, *receive ye one another as Christ received us, to the glory of God*, Rom. xv. and again, *whereunto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing; and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you*, Phil. iii.

BUT an intolerant disposition and conduct towards a weak brother, or doubting christian, in things not absolutely necessary to salvation; is, I think, evidently contrary both to reason and revelation; they therefore that say (in points of a circumstantial nature) it is best for persons who are of the same mind to be by themselves, to the exclusion of all others, who differ from them, are, I think, evidently mistaken: for, as all men are not endued with the same capacities or powers of body or mind; and yet they are all partakers of the same human nature, and objects of God's providential care and regard, and are appointed by him also to be *mutually dependent, and useful to one another* in the *civil affairs and concerns of this life*; so all christians have not the same measure of faith and knowledge, or of gifts, bestowed on them; yet, as sincere believers, they are all partakers of Christ, and are placed in the church for their mutual benefit, that they should be aiding and assisting to each other in things sacred and religious; and as it is certain that God receives all such into his church and favour, whether their faith and gifts be strong or weak, great or small; so

Christ

## I N T R O D U C T I O N. 5

Christ also hath appointed *ordinances* in his church ; and *pastors*, and *teachers*, for the furtherance and edification of all his saints ; whether they be weak or strong in the faith, according as he hath received authority and commandment from the Father, for that very end and purpose : he would not therefore have the least of those little ones, that believe in him, to be neglected or shut out of his church ; because it is not the will of the Father, who gave them to him, to be saved by him ; that any one, even the least of them, should be stumbled, or offended, and perish.—*Take heed, therefore, saith Christ, that ye despise not one of these little ones that believe on me.*

THE church is the *nursery* of the saints ; and to with-hold, or deprive any of them of those means and ordinances which God hath provided for their spiritual growth, edification, and comfort, is doing them a manifest injury ; and is a with-holding that from them, to which, by the divine gift and appointment, they have, in my opinion, a clear and undeniable right.—And as such a conduct is injurious to their weak or mistaken brethren, (if weak or mistaken as they suppose) so they who reject them do manifest wrong to their own souls ; for as the feeblest members of the natural body are parts of that body, and are all of them therefore useful and necessary for the good of the whole, as the apostle argues, 1 Cor. xii. so are all believers in the  
mystical

## 6 INTRODUCTION.

mystical body of Christ; they are all essential parts of that body, and every one members of it, in particular. The strong believer, therefore, cannot say to the weak, I have no need of thee; for we are all members one of another, and are capable of being mutually helpful to each other, and are appointed of God so to be:—Nor can the church of Christ be complete and made perfect, but in the perfection of all its members; and that edification which tends to the perfection of the whole, doth not consist in any exact uniformity of sentiment, or agreement of all the members of the church militant, in speculative notions, positive institutions, or modes of discipline; but in truth and love, which is the substance and end of all institutions that tend to the edifying of the body of Christ, as, I think, the apostle plainly teaches, Eph. iv. And if this grace be diligently followed after and practised by all the saints; every thing else, will, I doubt not, be properly attended to by them, which constitutes true decency, and order in the churches of Christ; for it does not appear that the whole christian church was at any time, exactly of one mind, and judgment in all things; unless we may except that happy moment mentioned Acts iv. 32. and *that perfect oneness* which the historian there mentions, seems to be meant of a fervent and perfect love they then had, and manifested one towards another, in Christ Jesus, and for his name's sake. Nor is it certain that the whole church will be exactly of one and the

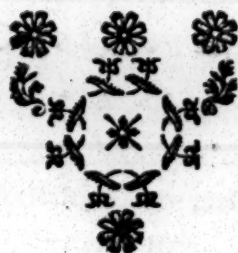


the same mind in all things, this side heaven; for here we know but in part, 1 Cor. xiii.—Hence the apostle writing to Timothy says, the end of the commandment, or *charge* given to gospel teachers, which they should be always aiming at in their doctrine and ministry, is *love*, out of a *pure heart*, and of a *good conscience*, and of *faith unfeigned*; from which, says he, some having swerved, have turned aside unto vain jangling, 1 Tim. i. Moreover, this pure undissembled christian love also is often spoken of in scripture as the most *certain*, *universal*, and *genuine mark of real conversion to God*, and of *true faith in Jesus Christ*; “for, by this, faith Christ, shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another; and therefore every one that *loveth is born of God and knoweth God*; but he that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God *is love*.”

HENCE, I think, it plainly follows that so far, and no farther, doth our preaching, or hearing, or zeal for any *doctrine, ordinance, or church-discipline*, tend to edify the saints, and glorify God; but, as it tends to promote real christian love among the churches of Christ in general; and the several members of it in particular:—for this reason we are warned by an apostle, and charged, in a very solemn manner; not to strive or fight about words to no profit, for such kind of contests tend not to edify the saints in love, [but rather to make, and increase divisions among them,

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them, and consequently to perplex, and subvert the souls of the hearers ; but *he that loveth his brother walketh in the light* ; and, in the truth as it is in Jesus, and *there is no occasion of stumbling in him* ; for, if any stumble at such a one, *he must look for the cause of that stumbling in himself, and not in another.*



I AU 59

THE

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THE  
DOCTRINE  
OF  
BAPTISMS.

CHAP. I.

**W**E read, in the New Testament, of *two baptisms* properly so called, *one with water, the other with the Holy Spirit*.—That by water, is an *external washing*, or baptism of the body; the *outward man*.—That by the Spirit, is an *internal washing*, or baptism of the soul; the *inward man*. And the *former* seems to be a *figurative* representation, or emblem of the *latter*: for as the body is purified by water; so is the soul, of a believer, purified by the Spirit. Ye, saith Peter, *have purified your souls, in obeying the truth, through the Spirit*, 1. Pet. i.

Now *John*, the MESSIAH's *barbinger*, baptized with water only, and not with the Spirit; but

B

*Christ*



*Christ* himself did not baptize with water, but with the Spirit only :—*Christ's* disciples also are said to baptize, even whilst he was with them, which they probably did, after the manner of *John*, with the baptism of repentance, &c. whose disciples some, if not all of them, had been ; before they left *John*, to follow *Christ*. But we do not find that *Christ* gave them any express command for it ; for it is no where mentioned in their commission, when *Christ* (before his death) sent them to preach the gospel, and to work miracles in his name. We read, likewise, that after the day of *Pentecost* ; when *Christ* himself had baptized them all with the Holy Spirit, (which he had received from the FATHER, for that purpose), that the apostles had power given them to administer that same Spirit to believers, *through the laying on of hands, and prayer* ; and this, as some suppose, was what our Lord eminently meant, when he said, *he that believeth on me, the works which I do, shall he do also ; and GREATER WORKS than these shall he do, because I go unto my FATHER* :—for *Christ*, while on earth, did not thus baptize any one with the Spirit.—Now it is not baptism with the *Spirit*, but that with *water*, which I intend chiefly to consider ; because, as I conceive, the difference of christians about this external and *carnal rite*, has occasioned much *uncharitable strife*, and *hurtful debate* ; among the churches of *Christ*.

AND

AND here we shall consider these three things:—  
 1. The *subject*; 2. The *mode*; and 3. The *importance* of *water-baptism*.

OUR first enquiry then is, who are the proper subjects of baptism? *infants* or *adults*?—That *infants* are not the proper subjects of it, seems to me plain for these TWO REASONS;

1. BECAUSE, we no-where read that *Christ*, or his apostles have given *any precept or command* for it. Nor,

2. Do I find a *single instance*, or *example of infant baptism*, in all the New Testament; and this, I think, ought to *satisfy* and settle the minds of serious enquirers, in this particular: for, if there be *no command* for it, *nor example of it*, certainly the practice is not warranted by the holy scriptures; consequently *it cannot be supported by the word and authority of God*, but *by the reasonings and authority of men only*.

THE *church of England* doth, I think, plainly declare that *adults and believers only*, are proper subjects of baptism; for her *catechism* says, *repentance* towards God, and *faith* towards our Lord Jesus Christ, are required of them that come to be baptized; and yet (strangely inconsistent with herself) she admits, and even directs *infants* to be baptized, *who can neither repent nor believe*;—

and what, if possible, is still more unaccountable, she requires *sponsors*, or *sureties*, who, in the name of the child, shall engage and promise that the child himself shall *hereafter repent and believe*; though they cannot tell but the child may die (as many of them certainly do) before he comes to years of understanding; and of those who live to an age capable of hearing and understanding the gospel; many of them may never have a heart, or *grace given them to repent*, and obey it: yet those *sureties* solemnly promise that they shall repent, &c. Is not this practice then of baptizing infants evidently contrary both to *reason* and *revelation*? To say the *sureties repent and believe for the child*, and that their repentance and faith is reckoned or imputed to him, is, I think, a *romish tenet*, manifestly absurd and *unscriptural*; for *repentance* and *faith*, being *personal acts*, and denoting a *change of mind*, and *conduct* in the subject; it is not possible that another's faith, &c. should be properly imputed to him; but it must be *a work really wrought in him*, and *acted by him*.—Nor is it, I conceive, *any breach of charity* to suppose, that many of those sponsors are themselves grossly *ignorant*, *impenitent*, and *unbelieving*.

NOR have we any scriptural ground to believe that those who are *baptized in their infancy* are at all *profited by it*; for we do not see, as they grow up to years of understanding, that they are more *bumble*, *teachable*, or *religiously disposed*, than many other children



children, who are not so baptized; and are very far from evidencing by their *dispositions, temper, or conduct*; that they were *really regenerated and born again of the Spirit of God*, at the time of their baptism, as, I think, the church of England very erroneously supposes and teaches; both in her *form of baptism*, and in her *catechism*.—Neither have we any reason from scripture to suppose, nor believe that children, who die in a state of infancy, are saved by virtue of their baptism, or that any children are lost or perish for want of it; whatever some men may have imagined or taught to the contrary.

CHRIST, it is true, would have little children to be brought to him;—it is not said to be baptized, but to be blessed of him, see Mark x. 13—16. *for the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* And when godly parents thus offer up their children, in prayer to God, praying for a blessing on them, in the name of the Lord Jesus, they may, and often, I doubt not, obtain blessings for them, both temporal and spiritual; not by baptizing them, (because God hath no-where appointed or commanded it) but by praying for a blessing on them; and those christian parents who neglect *thus* to offer up their children to God, in the name of the Lord Jesus, are, I think, very culpable, and worthy of that reproof which Christ gave to his disciples, when they would have prevented *little children* from being brought to him, (not, as I said before,

before, to be baptized) but that he might pray for them, and bless them.

THE reason also which our Lord gives why he would that little children should be brought, and not hindered, from coming to him, is specially to be noticed by us; which was this, viz. *because of such is the kingdom of heaven*: in which words, I humbly conceive, are implied the following particulars;

1. THAT GOD, whose tender mercies are over all *his* works, and who delighteth in mercy, is ready to shew mercy to little children, *as such*, whether their parents be *rich* or *poor*, *believers* or *unbelievers*: for our Lord makes no difference, that I can find, between little children, on *that*, or any other account whatever; for as, in that infant state, they cannot *believe on Christ* and *confess him*, so neither are they capable of *rejecting Christ*, or of *denying him*.

2. THE words, I think, imply that children who die in a state of infancy are not *annihilated*, as some have imagined, without having, in my opinion, the least ground for it, from *reason* or *revelation*.

3. THEY seem to imply that *children dying in a state of infancy are all saved*, not by virtue of their being baptized, but of the sovereign mercy of God towards them, through Christ's redemption

tion of them and praying to the Father for them, for he prayed, not for the world, but for those whom the Father had given him; and therefore he would have them to be brought unto him, that he might thus mercifully declare his good will towards such little ones, and pray for them, and bless them.—And when Christ immediately added, Verily, I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child (would receive it) shall not enter therein; he plainly declared, that a *childlike, humble, and teachable disposition of mind and heart*, was absolutely necessary for *adult persons*, in order to their actual admission into the kingdom of God; for Christ was sent, and came into the world to seek and to save that which was lost; and all such humble souls he saves, and *no others*; for *God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the HUMBLE*:—we find nothing then in this passage that warrants, or gives the least countenance to infant baptism; *it makes* rather against it than for it.

AGAIN; Some suppose that the infant offspring of believing parents have a right to baptism because they are said to be *holy*, 1 Cor. vii. 14. but the apostle, in that place, says nothing about *baptism*; nor has it, in my opinion, the least reference to it.—In what sense then are they said to be *holy*? certainly, not as having *holiness* communicated to them, *from their earthly parents*; for they who are *truly sanctified*, are made holy,  
not



not by being born of the flesh; or of the will of man, but of GOD, John i. 13. Nor can they be counted properly holy in a relative sense, or as having a federal right to the spiritual blessings, and *privileges of the gospel*, merely because they are the children of believing parents, according to the flesh; for it is certain, both from *scripture* and *experience*, that the *offspring* of believers are, by nature impure and prone to evil, and *children of wrath*, even as others, whose parents are not believers; and must all of them be *born again*, before they can enter the kingdom of God: In what sense then doth the apostle call them *holy*? in the same sense, as I conceive, that the unbelieving wife is said to be *sanctified* or *made holy*, by the believing husband, and the unbelieving husband by the believing wife: but how is the unbelieving wife sanctified? surely not made holy in her own person, by virtue of her marriage-relation to a believing husband, nor as obtaining thereby a right to *christian baptism*, or to any gospel privilege whatever, for the apostle supposes her to continue an unbeliever; and consequently as *unholy in herself*, and in her *dispositions*, as any other unbeliever, who, as yet, obeys not the gospel of Christ; but being sanctified of God to the believing husband, as his lawful wife, she is therefore, in that connection, sanctified by her *believing husband*, with respect to the issue he may have by her; and hence the apostle infers the holiness of their offspring, because their marriage was scripturally lawful and approved of God; for  
else,

else, says he, were your children unclean, but now are they *holy*:—*unclean* in this place, does, I think, *only* mean, an illegitimate or spurious offspring, the children of whoredom, and uncleanness; as all those are whose parents are not scripturally joined together in marriage, according to the allowance, and appointment of God:—consequently their being called *holy*, in opposition to that *uncleanness*, can only signify a legitimate offspring; as if he had said, they are not *bastards*, but children begotten in lawful marriage. This, I think, is the *obvious* meaning of the passage, for the holiness here ascribed to their children, evidently depends on this, that their marriage was lawful, and that the unbelieving party was sanctified by the believer; and therefore he exhorts the believing husband not to put away his wife (as the Jews did their idolatrous wives under the law), nor the believing wife to leave her husband; for God hath called us to peace: “and, how knowest thou O man, he adds, whether thou shalt save thy wife, &c?”—This view of the passage is, I think, well expressed by *Mr. McLean* in the following words: “As the unbelieving party is sanctified  
 “ or made holy only in respect of her being a  
 “ lawful wife to the believer, so the children  
 “ can have no holiness in consequence of this,  
 “ but that of being a lawful issue:—their  
 “ question, as appears from the apostle’s answer, says nothing about their children, but  
 “ only this; may we lawfully retain our unbe-  
 C “ lieving

“ lieving wives, or must we put them away,  
 “ as old Israel were obliged to do by the law of  
 “ Moses, See Deut. vii. 3. Ezra x. 13.”

I OBSERVE further, *to the pure all things are pure*; thus marriage, as a divine institution, and every creature good for food, God hath appointed and created, *to be received with thanksgiving, by them that believe and know the truth*; see 1 Tim. iv. 3, 4. and to them *they are sanctified by the word of God and prayer*—but to them, saith the apostle, that *are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure*; for even *their mind, and conscience is defiled*; consequently to such persons, their most ordinary employments and connections in life, though *in themselves lawful*, are *by them defiled*, and nothing is sanctified or pure to them; hence their offspring (as the seed of evil doers and unholy persons) cannot be holy, but unclean; for *if the root be holy, so are the branches*; and, on the other hand, *if the root be unholy, the branches must be unholy likewise*.—Every thing which an unbeliever, or, wicked man doth is evil, because it is done by a wicked man; therefore it is said, *the very ploughing of the wicked is sin*, nay even his *prayer is an abomination to the Lord*, because he doth neither with a view to the glory of God; and as God hath willed and commanded it. Hence the children of believers, and godly persons are said to be holy, in opposition to them whose parents are unbelieving and ungodly:—but they can have no right to baptism, or any gospel-privilege  
 until



until they believe in Christ, after the example of their believing parents.—What privilege and advantage then, some may say, have the children of believing parents above those of unbelievers? I answer, besides the benefit of their continual prayers to God for them, they have this advantage, and a great one it is, viz. their being early taught and instructed by their religious parents in the way of salvation through the knowledge of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ; which also is recommended to them and enforced on them by the holy example and faith of their believing parents, which the children of prophane and unbelieving parents are not; and thus, as the apostle speaks, *they are brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.* And this surely is a great privilege and advantage which they enjoy above other children; for *train up a child,* saith the scripture, *in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it:* and this, as the apostle tells us, was the great advantage which the Jews had above the Gentiles; it was not their being outwardly circumcised, which profited them nothing, unless they kept the whole law; but their *chief privilege,* saith the apostle, was this, *that to them were committed the oracles of God,* and so their children, by that means, *were taught to know the holy scriptures, from their youth, which are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith, which is, in Christ Jesus.*

AGAIN; It is supposed by many that *baptism* comes in the room of *circumcision*—children were circumcised under the Old Testament, and by that ordinance were received into God's covenant with Abraham; to whom he had said, *I will be a GOD unto thee, and to thy seed after thee*:—hence it is argued that the children of believers have a right to baptism under the gospel, and are thereby received into the church of Christ; and that baptism is to them a *seal* or *token* of their being the children of God, and *heirs of the kingdom of heaven*; even as the *carnal Jews* supposed the *rite of circumcision* to have been, unto the infant seed of believing Abraham; and that none could be saved without it:—but the apostle Paul speaks far otherwise, and hath fully demonstrated that the true seed of Abraham there spoken of are not all his natural seed, but those only who should believe in Christ, and in God by Christ, as did Abraham; whom therefore the apostle calls the children of promise—the *children of promise*, saith he, are *counted for the seed*.—Nor do I read, in the New Testament, of any *mark* or *seal* which God puts on his *chosen* or *peculiar people*; either by way of *distinction* or *confirmation*, but that of his Spirit. And the time of their sealing is not said to be in a state of *infancy*, before they had *faith*, but after they had heard and obeyed the gospel of Christ; in whom, saith Paul, after that *ye believed, ye were SEALED with that holy Spirit of promise,*

*promise, &c. Eph. i.—and again, chap. iv. grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are SEALED unto the day of redemption. God's everlasting covenant with Christ, and with his people, in Christ, may very properly be said to be sealed with his blood;—but it does not appear to me that any ordinance, as baptism, or the Lord's Supper, can with propriety, or truth be called, a sealing ordinance; for tho' believers may, and often do receive benefit and comfort by a due, and proper attendance on God's ordinances; yet it is not the ordinance itself, but the Spirit, through faith, that seals them for God, and establishes them in the truth, as it is in Jesus:—for it will not, I suppose, be denied that many of those who are baptized, and who also come to the Lord's table, are not real believers in Christ, with that faith which worketh by love and overcometh the world; for many walk, saith the apostle, of whom I have told you often, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things:—for such professors, though with their mouths they profess to know and believe in Christ, yet in works they evidently deny him.*

CIRCUMCISION indeed was a *sign* or *seal* to Abraham of the righteousness of faith, which he had in uncircumcision; therefore it was a *seal* to him, only as a believer; consequently it could not be a seal to any of his offspring in the same  
sense



sense that it was to Abraham, but as believers also;—hence none but those who believe in God, as did Abraham, whether Jews or Gentiles, are considered and regarded by the scripture, as the true seed of Abraham to whom the promise was made, and not to any of his natural offspring, *merely* on the account of their being circumcised;—how then can it be reasonably inferred that the children of believers under the gospel can have a right to the blessings and privileges of the covenant of grace, *merely on account of their being baptized?*—neither is *outward circumcision in the flesh*, the *true circumcision*, nor that, as I conceive, which was a seal to believing Abraham of *the righteousness of faith*; but an *internal circumcision of the heart* is, I think, that which was intended and meant by it; for the apostle expressly says, *circumcision is not that which is outward in the flesh; but circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God.* Some perhaps will say, *if the root be holy, so are the branches*: true; but who are those branches? certainly not those who were broken off, *because of unbelief*—who then? they who, as *touching the election*, are said to be *loved for the Father's sake*, and these, sooner or later if they live to years of understanding, are all born of God, believe in Christ and follow him; and none else, in my opinion, have a right to christian baptism, whether they be children of believing *Jews*, or believing *Gentiles*.—It is true; Abraham circumcised Isaac whilst an infant, on  
the

the eighth day from his birth, and for this he had God's *express command*; and if God had intended that the children of believing parents, under the gospel, should be baptized at eight days old, or in a state of infancy, *he would doubtless have given us an express command for that likewise*: but as this is *no-where commanded us*, nor so much as even mentioned, either by *Christ, or his apostles* throughout the New Testament; we justly may, and I think ought to conclude, that the baptism of infants, is an institution and appointment, *not of God, but of MEN.*

NOR, in my opinion, doth Col. ii. 11, 12. at all countenance the sentiment of those, who imagined that *baptism* succeeded *circumcision*, or came in the room of it; both of them which the apostle there mentions, being, as I conceive, meant of that which is *internal and spiritual*, and not that which is *carnal and outward in the flesh*, for they are both represented as effected by the same means, even *faith*; and produced by the power of God, who, at the same time, both purifies and circumcises the hearts of his people who believe in Jesus, and in God, by him; and that to the same end likewise, viz. for *the putting off the body of the sins of the flesh*;—in other words, *the putting off the old man with his deeds, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin*;—this, I conceive, from the scope of the passage, is what the apostle intends, and signifies; and not that baptism which is  
outward

outward in the flesh, but that which is internal by the Spirit, which is the true baptism of Christ, by which alone God circumcises and purifies the hearts of his people, through faith in Jesus, *who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.* There are indeed other texts often urged in favour of infant-baptism, though, as I conceive, quite foreign to the point in question, but I shall lay them before the reader, with proper answers in the words of a very sensible and candid writer, and are as follows :

“ THE first account of baptism, as a christian institution, is in Matt. xxviii. 19. “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations; baptizing them, &c.” the plain sense and meaning of which words cannot be better expressed than in the following paraphrase of Dr. S. Clarke, viz. “Go therefore and preach the gospel to all the world, making disciples out of every nation, and baptizing them with water *in the name*, &c. that is, receiving them to *a profession of the belief*, and an obligation to the practice of that religion, which God the Father has revealed, and taught by his Son, and confirmed and established by the Holy Spirit.”—Mark xvi. 15, 16. gives the same account of this institution, though in different words.”

“ IT is certain, the scripture makes a difference between the baptisms of *John* and *Christ*; for  
the



the same persons who had already received *John's* baptism, were baptized a second time *in the name of the Lord Jesus*, Acts xix. 3, 4, 5. The chief distinctions are these following :

1. " THE baptism of *John* was confined to the *Jews*, but christian baptism is appointed for *all nations*.

2. " JOHN baptized the people to *prepare* them for the faith of the Messiah *about to come*, or *just coming*, but christian-baptism is declarative of faith in the Messiah *not coming*, but *come*.

3. " THE scripture, I think, affords ground also for this distinction, viz. christian-baptism teaches expressly faith in the *Holy Spirit*, which doth not appear to be any part of the instruction necessary at *John's* baptism, Acts xix 2.

" SOME learned divines make another very great and *important* difference between the two baptisms; that is, *John's* baptism *excluded infants*, but christian baptism *includes them*. Dr. Whitby observes, it is not to be wondered at that *infants* were not baptized during *John's* ministry, because the baptism used by *John*, and *Christ's* disciples (before the institution of *christian-baptism*) was only the baptism of *repentance* and *faith* in the Messiah which was for to come, of both which *infants* were incapable. *Turretin* divinity professor at *Geneva*, says, *John* admitted *none* to

D. baptism,

baptism, but such as confessed their sins; because his business lay in baptizing the *adults*.—How far this sentiment (that the baptism of *John* excluded infants, but that yet they have a right to christian-baptism) is agreeable to scripture, shall next be considered.

“ WHOEVER will give himself the trouble to read the texts wherein *John's* baptism is mentioned, will, I believe, perceive no footsteps in them of *his* baptizing *infants*: nor is there any declaration, or the least hint, that the disciples of *Christ*, before his death, baptized any but grown people.—When therefore our Saviour after his resurrection, instituted *this* sacrament of baptism, if infants were to be received to it; it cannot be doubted that he himself sufficiently *declared* this to his first and immediate followers; which sufficient and only authentic declaration must appear in some passage of the New Testament:—hence the baptism of infants being hitherto *uncommanded*, concerning which God had given nothing in express charge; it will seem quite necessary they should have some plain, clear, determinate instructions on this head; especially, and above all in this sort of duty, which owes *all* its obligation and *all its* virtue to *positive command*.

“ LET us now examine the passages of the New Testament, and see whether *Jesus Christ* has by him-

himself, or his immediate followers, declared that *infants* are the subjects of this institution.

“THE first account of baptism as a christian ordinance is in Matt. xxviii. 19. “Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them, &c.” which commission in Mark xvi. 15, 16. is thus expressed, “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, he that believeth and is baptized, &c.”

“THE only difference in the accounts of these two evangelists, is, that *Matthew* in his expression teach (μαθητευσατε, disciple) all nations, is more concise than *Mark*, who instead of it says, *preach the gospel to every creature, he that believeth, &c.*

“IT may not be impertinent to observe, that the word in Matt. rendered *teach*, is not the word commonly rendered teach in the New Testament, the word commonly used is διδασκω, which occurs very often: but the other word μαθητεω *teach*, is used only three times more in all the New Testament, as in Matt. xiii. 52. every scribe *which is instructed* μαθητευθεις. Matt. xxvii. 58. Joseph who also himself *was Jesus disciple*. Acts xiv. 21. when they had preached the gospel in that city, and *had taught* many μαθητευσαντες. They did not barely *preach the gospel*, but taught so effectually as to prevail on



many to become *disciples*, or *believers*. This is the plain import of the original.

“ THE common appellation of *christian believers*, occurring in very numerous passages of the New Testament, is μαθηται, *disciples*: as this is the usual *name* of believers in *Christ*, we have the *verb* of it in our Lord’s commission, when he bids his followers to go and make *converts* to him throughout the world. So that whereas μαθητευσω implies *teaching*, full as much as the common word διδασκω, the difference is, that the former has a more precise and determinate meaning; conveying to the apostles this idea, viz. *to teach the people*, as to persuade them to become *my disciples*. I do not dislike the reading, *disciple all nations*; provided the idea of *teaching* make a *necessary* part of it, and that *disciple* and *baptize* be not taken for synonymous terms, as some make them, I think, without any foundation in scripture or just criticism.—Is not our Saviour’s commission then, far from declaring fully and plainly in favour of children’s baptism, perfectly silent on this head? does it then say more than this, *make disciples, converts, believers, amongst all nations, and then baptize them*? But if it should be thought there is some obscurity in so brief an account as this of *Matthew* and *Mark*, the *subsequent practice* of the apostles must be owned the best and only *authentic* explanation and comment on their Master’s law: this shall next be considered.

“ THE first mention of baptism *administered* after Christ's ascension is in Acts ii. 38, 39. Then Peter said to them, REPENT, *and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, &c.*—then they THAT GLADLY RECEIVED HIS WORD *were baptized.*—Infants bear no part in this history of baptism; unless it be supposed that they are included in ver. 39. *for the PROMISE is to you and to your children, &c.* Upon this permit me to make two or three very obvious remarks.

1. “ THE PROMISE is not *baptism*, but expressed in the words immediately foregoing, viz. *ye shall receive THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.*

2. “ You and *your children* is nothing more than you and your POSTERITY *τοῖς τέκνοις ὑμῶν*, so in John viii. 39. *if ye were Abraham's children τέκνα, ye would do the works, &c.* Acts xiii. 32, 33. *the PROMISE which was made unto the Fathers GOD hath fulfilled the same UNTO US THEIR CHILDREN, ΤΕΚΝΟΙΣ.*

3. “ THIS PROMISE takes place neither in *them* nor *their children*, nor the *gentiles* (them that are afar off) but on *condition* of their *believing*, expressed in the *text* by *as many as the Lord our GOD shall call.* So that the word *children* here has no reference to the infantile state; nor does the *promise* mean *baptism.*—Dr. Whitby also here observes,

observes, these words will not prove a right of *infants* to receive baptism : the *promise* mentioned being that only of *the Holy Spirit*, mentioned ver. 16, 17, 18. and so relates only to the times of the miraculous effusion of the Holy Spirit, and to those persons who, *by age*, were made capable of those *extraordinary gifts*.

“ THE next administration of baptism is in Acts viii. 12, 13. here likewise nothing is to be found but the baptism of professed *believers*. The history is particular and exact as to mention *men and women* ; but there it stops : and from his stopping at *men and women* in his account of baptism, it seems, he could (with truth) go no further, and therefore says nothing of the baptism of their infants, because he knew nothing of it.

“ THE writer of the Acts is careful to make express mention of *children* in an historical fact of much less consequence, when children were really part of the company, Acts xxi. 5. they all brought us on our way with WIVES AND CHILDREN ;—we may observe in another instance or two how carefully the *scripture* mentions *children* when they are parties concerned, Matt. xiv. 21. They that had eaten were about five thousand men besides WOMEN AND CHILDREN ; and in the next chapter which records another miracle of the like sort, Matt. xv. 38. and they that had eaten were five thousand men besides

WOMEN



WOMEN AND CHILDREN.—And is it not a little strange that we *no where* find *children* mentioned, not *once* mentioned ; if it were the apostles custom to baptize *them* with their parents?

“ THE next baptism is that of the eunuch, Acts viii. 36, 37, &c. who received it on this profession of faith—I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.—A noble monument of the simplicity of the first times ! what a world of strife and mischief would have been prevented if the church had never departed from it ! As an eminent writer remarks ; “ it was never well with the christian church, since it began to be a matter of so much subtlety and wit for a man to become a true christian.”

“ Acts ix. 18. Relates the baptism of Paul only :—in the next chapter we have the baptism of Cornelius and his friends, where it is said, while Peter was speaking the Holy Spirit fell on all that heard the word.—When Peter saw this great effect on his audience he said, “ Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we, &c.—but we find no mention of *infants* in any part of this history.”

“ It remains to enquire whether the *baptism* of *households* mentioned in several passages of scripture does not prove or suppose the baptism of infants ? we read that *Lydia was baptized and her*  
 HOUSEHOLD,

HOUSEHOLD, Acts xvi. 15.—that the *jailor* was baptized and all his, ver. 33. and that *Paul* baptized the HOUSEHOLD of *Stephanus*, 1 Cor i. 16. Here we may make a few plain observations.

“ 1. It is certain the word *house* or *household* is often used where none are meant but such as are come to years of understanding; for example, Luke xi. 17. *a house divided against a house*, &c. John iv. 53. *himself believed and his* WHOLE HOUSE, Acts ii. 36. *Let ALL THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL know assuredly that God hath made this same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.* Acts xviii. 8. *Crispus believed in the Lord* WITH ALL HIS HOUSE: consequently, to infer it as fact that infants were baptized, as part of the house, is *supposing*, and taking for granted, not *proving* the matter in question.

2. “ Of the three examples of households baptized, it is expressly said of one (the jailor’s) that *Paul and Silas spake the word of the Lord to him, and TO ALL THAT WERE IN HIS HOUSE: and that he believed in GOD* WITH ALL HIS HOUSE, Acts xvi. 32, 34.

“ Thus wheresoever we meet with the sacrament of baptism, whether among Jews or Gentiles, whether administered by John or the disciples of Christ, there is a total profound silence concerning the baptism of infants.

“ WHOEVER

“WHOEVER shall do the kind office to shew me from some *authentic declaration* of the New Testament, that infants were baptized, I promise him to be much more speedy in writing a retraction, than I have been to set down my reasons, at least what appear reasons to me, for differing in this point from the generality of my fellow christians.

“Now because the New Testament is as silent on baptism, as the Lord’s supper, for *children*; it may, I think, be fairly concluded, the want of baptism does not prejudice *their* salvation, any more than the want of the Lord’s supper.

“THERE was a time, when it was the *general practice of the christian church* to give the Lord’s supper to children; grounded on a mistake of that scripture, *except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you*. The same notion of absolute and universal necessity, I suppose, led christians to baptize their children:—No less a man than *St. Austin* taught, and strenuously maintained, that *infants unbaptized* were adjudged to *everlasting punishments*.

“MEN’s opinions of the *ritual* parts of religion soon began to run extravagantly high,\* and still  
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\* “The *necessity of the Lord’s supper for infants* was taught by the consent of the eminent fathers of some ages, without any



do so, far beyond the simplicity of the gospel: as if there were in the things themselves, (without respect to the moral and spiritual qualifications of the receiver,) a certain inexplicable *charm*, to defend us from our ghostly enemy, and ascertain salvation:—and this wrong notion, of the absolute necessity of ceremonial observances, has been a very powerful engine in the hands of men aiming at spiritual dominion, to enslave their neighbours minds and consciences.

“ IN the days when *infant communion* was the universal practice, it would doubtless have been thought a great injury to deny children the communion of saints; but the church having been long persuaded that it has no scripture foundation, has laid it aside, and would now be as much surprized to see infants brought to the communion, as she then would have been to see them excluded.

“ THE truth seems to be this: the *scripture* being as entirely silent on the *baptism* as on the *communion* of infants; and the *personal* qualifications of repentance, and faith, being full as strongly, at least, required for baptism, as *self-examination*, and other personal acts, for the Lord's supper, they have no concern in either  
of

any opposition from any of their co-temporaries: and was delivered by them—not as their own opinion, but as *apostolic tradition*.” Chilling.

of the two sacraments, nor ought it to be thought any more an injury, to with-hold our children from baptism, than from the Lord's supper :—and I think it no difficult task to prove, that every objection that lies against their being admitted to the *communion*, lies also against their being admitted to *baptism*.

“As to the promise of *sureties*, on which ground infants are baptized, might they not full as well be received to the *holy communion* upon the same foundation? may not *sureties* as well promise, they shall *examine* themselves, as that they shall *repent*? &c.

“If then infants, for want of repentance and faith in themselves, be authorized to receive baptism on the promise of their *sureties*, Christ or his apostles must have declared this: if they have, where is it? is not the affair of *sureties* intirely a *supplement* of our own?

“THERE are sundry passages of scripture commonly thought to countenance infant baptism, which therefore must be considered, Mark x. 13. &c. *they brought YOUNG CHILDREN to Christ, that he should TOUCH them; and his disciples rebuked those that brought them: but when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as*

*a little child, he shall not enter therein.* AND HE TOOK THEM UP IN HIS ARMS, PUT HIS HANDS UPON THEM, AND BLESSED THEM. There is no difficulty in these words. We are expressly told, children were brought unto our Saviour, for the benefit of *his blessing* and *prayers*, attended with the usual ceremony of *imposition of hands*: for in this manner holy men were used *to bless*, or *pray for a blessing* on others, as *Jacob, &c.* *Christ*, in like manner, called for the children (whom his disciples would have sent away) that he might *bless* them, by *imposition of hands and prayer*. Can we perceive any thing concerning the christian rite of *baptism* given to these children? is it said they were brought for that purpose, or that Christ baptized them? or that he ordered them to be baptized?—we find no such thing.

“No doubt, the prayers of pious persons may succeed for a blessing upon infants or others; and if the fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much, how much more the prayers of *Jesus Christ*! let us follow him in praying for our children: but if we will *baptize* them too, Christ affords us no example of this in the passage under consideration.

“BUT is not the *baptism of infants* implied in these following words? *except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* Here it may be observed, that as  
christian



christian baptism was not yet instituted, some good expositors understand this passage, not of *baptism*, but of the influences of the *Spirit only*: so *Grotius*, and *Calvin*, one of the best expositors of his day, observes, to talk to *Nicodemus* of *baptism* would be premature; the design of Christ here is to exhort him to *regeneration*, and newness of life.

“ THERE are two other passages produced in proof of infant baptism, 1 Cor. vii. 14. *else were your children unclean, but now are they HOLY*, Rom. xi. 16. *if the root be HOLY, so are the branches*. I am very willing that children should be as holy as the most benevolent person can wish them, and have no manner of inclination to lay a stain on that *innocent* age, which our Saviour was so remarkably inclined to point out to us, as the *emblem* and *sample* of that simplicity and purity necessary to all his disciples. But there is not a word mentioned about their *baptism*.

“ But no argument is received more readily than this: Baptism comes in the room of *circumcision*: children were circumcised, therefore are to be baptized. If this be so, Christ or his apostles have declared it.—But where is the passage of scripture, which instructs us that baptism comes in the room of *circumcision*? the New Testament speaks very copiously of *circumcision* as a rite *abolished*.—But no-where,  
that

that I can find, does the scripture say, or so much as hint, that baptism comes in its place.

“ I KNOW but of one passage in all the New Testament, that has been offered in support of the opinion, that baptism comes in the place of circumcision, and that is, Col. ii. 11, 12. *In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ; buried with him in baptism, &c.*——For the right understanding of this passage, it will be needful to observe, that the *Collossians*, as other churches of the Gentiles, were in danger of being *seduced* to the observance of circumcision; to guard them against this danger, the apostle here tells them, they had received the *internal* and *spiritual* circumcision, made without hands, and consequently the literal circumcision was not necessary; the apostle teaches the same doctrine in other places, thus, Rom. ii. 28, 29. *he is not a Jew who is one OUTWARDLY; neither is that circumcision which is OUTWARD in the FLESH; but he is a Jew who is one INWARDLY; and CIRCUMCISION is that of the HEART, in the SPIRIT, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of GOD.* In a word, the circumcision here spoken of cannot mean *baptism*, for it is expressly said to be made *without hands*, &c. which is not true of [water] baptism, any more than of the literal circumcision.

“ BAPTISM

“BAPTISM is not a deduction of reason but a plain fact, concerning which the acutest philosopher can know nothing more than any man of common sense. What the scripture testifies and declares concerning this fact, that is our rule, obvious to every attentive reader.

“AFTER the strictest search into the nature and design of this positive institution, it appears to me there is no positive proof that it was designed for children; and if it be allowed there is no positive evidence, it is, I think, allowing there is no proof at all: for nothing of a positive and ritual nature can be proved a duty, or a command of God, merely by our own *reasoning*, and by arguments drawn from supposed *fitness*. If once we admit as *divine appointments*, practices grounded on our own notions of *fitness*, *expediency*, *usefulness*, &c. there is no knowing where to stop.”

THE above extract is taken from a pamphlet entitled, *A plain account of the ordinance of baptism, &c. in a course of letters to DR. HOADLY, Bp. of Winchester*.—These letters fell into my hands about eighteen or twenty years ago:—I read them with attention; and was thereby fully convinced that I had no warrant from the New Testament to baptize infants—in consequence of that conviction, I discontinued the practice of baptizing infants from that time to the present.



sent hour.—But the author's arguments in defence of immersion, as the true mode of baptism, did not appear to me *clear* and *conclusive*; I have read them over again with care and attention, yet I am not convinced *from the scripture account of baptism*, that it was administered either by *John*, or the *apostles of Christ*, by immersion, or dipping persons under water; but only by *sprinkling*, or *pouring water* upon them.—This then shall be my next enquiry.—But I would first premise; that as I do not suppose infants to be proper subjects of baptism, some may ask, is not their baptism *invalid*, and ought they not to be *rebaptized* when adults? I, for my part, think they ought not: for, a mistake, as to the circumstance of time, will not, in my opinion, warrant a repetition of the ordinance, because its *importance* chiefly depends on the *name* or *truth* into which a person is baptized, and not on the *precise time* of its being performed; and *this truth*, as I conceive, is realized to the believer (who has been baptized in infancy) when in adult age he solemnly and with his heart professes faith in Jesus, that he is the Christ the Son of God; even as Isaac received (undoubtedly) the same benefit from circumcision, when he afterwards believed in God, as did Abraham, who believed in God *before* he was circumcised.

God, we know, *commanded all the males of Abraham's seed to be circumcised the eighth day*; but many of them were not circumcised

not at the *precise time* which God had appointed, but *many years* after ; yet surely *their* circumcision was real, and as valid as *that* of *those* who had been circumcised on the eighth day.

It may be objected, we have no *command* to baptize infants ; true : therefore *we* do it not, though some others may think they have a *divine warrant* for it ;—let not him that doth it not, judge him that doth it ;—*to his own master he standeth or falleth*.—Still it may be urged, it cannot be *valid*, because they have *no command* for it.

*Ans.* THE *Jews* had *no command* for circumcising their children but on the *eighth day only*, yet *their circumcision afterwards* was *valid*, as we before observed, though *their omission* was a *known and culpable neglect*, as is evident in the case of *Moses*, *Exod. iv. 24—26*.—*God delighteth in mercy*.

It may be further said, *infant baptism* cannot be *valid*, because they have neither *repentance* nor *faith* ; therefore they ought to be *rebaptized*.

*Ans.* GOD gives them his Spirit upon their believing in his Son *Jesus Christ*, and continues to bless and favour them with the tokens of his presence, without their being *rebaptized* ; consequently he does not require it of them, at least doth not insist on it, as some men are, wont to do.—*Let*

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*every one be fully persuaded in his own mind.—It is also evident that God as graciously regards, and blesses true believers that are not rebaptized, as much as those that think it their duty so to be.—Let us not judge one another; but follow after holiness and peace, without which no one shall see the Lord.*

BUT further, if the *infant-baptism* of true believers be invalid, merely because, at the time of their being baptized, they were destitute of *that faith*; so likewise is the *baptism* of those adults, who at the time of their being baptized had no *true faith* in Christ;—God looketh on the heart—consequently *their baptism* is no more acceptable with God, nor profitable to themselves; than the *baptism* of infants is to them. If then infants, ought to be rebaptized at the time of their believing, so ought those adults also who may afterwards with the heart believe on the Son of God. Their external profession of faith before men gives them no scripture right to it;—God requireth that of the heart; if they did it in a time of ignorance, or to please men, &c. which God abhors; or, in one word, in a state of unbelief, *their baptism* is not according to the word and will of God:—and are there not many such among the Baptist congregations?—Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.



## C H A P II.

## ON THE MODE OF BAPTISM.

**I**T seems to me that *baptism* was administered both by *John* and the *apostles of Christ*, by *sprinkling* or *pouring*, and not by *immersion*.

*Objection.* “ EVERY circumstance of chusing a *river* to baptize in, of going *down into* the water, and coming *up out of* the water, both the *baptizer* and the *baptized*: and the allusions to a *burial* and *rising again*; and of singling out a place proper for baptism, for this only reason, *because there was much water there*: all these circumstances are quite proper and natural to the custom of *immersion*. But it is hard to account for the mentioning or pertinence of them upon any other interpretation of baptism.”\*

*Answer.* I. A RIVER does not seem to have been chosen for the purpose of baptism, as if no other place was *proper* for it. The three thousand baptized, and added to the church the same day, see Acts ii. seem rather, in my opinion, to have been baptized in houses.—*Saul of Tarsus in the house of Judas*, Acts ix. Likewise the jailor and his family were, I conceive, baptized at

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home,

\* Plain account of the ordinance of baptism in a course of letters to Dr. Hoadly, Bishop of Winchester.

home, Acts xvi.—Cornelius also and his believing friends, were probably baptized in the centurion's own house, Acts x. and the words of Peter on that occasion, *can any one forbid water?* seems to imply that water was to be brought to them, and not that the persons to be baptized were led out to some other place for the conveniency of immersion, as *no hint of that kind is there given us.*

2. PERSONS may very properly be said to go down *into* a water or river, and come up *out of* it, without going into such a *depth* as is necessary for the purpose of *immersion*; nor do I remember it is any where said that the person baptized was *covered with water*, or *put under it*; and had this been the case, I can hardly think the scripture would have been entirely silent about it, but in some place or other it would have been expressly mentioned; especially, *if it be a circumstance of such importance*, as some persons suppose, and contend for.

3. NOR does the scripture, any where, that I can find, represent the mode of baptism as a resemblance of the burial and resurrection of Christ. I am sure the words of Paul, Rom. vi, 3, 4. Col. ii. 12. do not *expressly* declare it.—  
Neither,

4. DOES the passage John iii. 23. plainly tell us that *John* baptized in *Enon* because of the *depth*

*depth* of water in that place, *for the sake of immersion*; so that the arguments raised from such passages as these, to prove *immersion* the true mode of scripture baptism, amount, in my opinion to nothing more than *bare supposition*, without containing any certain *proof* of the point in question.

*Obj. 2.* "IT is said Matt. iii. 6. they were baptized of him in Jordan;—if they were in it, they went in it in order to be baptized by immersion: to say they went into it, to have a little water sprinkled or poured on them, which could have been done without it, is ridiculous, and an imposition on common sense. Wherefore this necessarily proves the mode of baptism being immersion."†

*Ans.* THE evangelist does not say they went in it, *in order to be baptized by immersion*, this therefore amounts to no more than *mere conjecture*, or *bare assertion* of the learned Doctor; we, on the other hand, may as reasonably suppose, and affirm that they went in to the water to be baptized by sprinkling, and not by immersion, for any thing that this text says to the contrary:—nor do I see any thing so absurd in the supposition of it, as Dr. Gill here asserts.  
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† This, and the following objections on the mode of baptism, are (all but one) taken from Dr. Gill's reply to Mr. Clarke of New England, see p. 76, &c.



Had John been sent only to give them to *drink* of the water of Jordan, it would have been more convenient for the people to come down to him unto the river, for that purpose, though it might have been given them some other way ;— so likewise if he baptized by sprinkling or pouring, it would have been highly inconvenient for him to have baptized them with the waters of Jordan, but *at* or *in*† the river itself ; for it does not appear that John, at that time, had any one to assist him in the discharge of his office, whatever he might have afterwards ; and as we are told great multitudes came to be baptized by him, it was, I think, necessary they should come down to him unto the river for that purpose ; and not that *John* should carry water up to them.—But had he baptized after the manner of the present advocates for immersion, it is scarce credible, how *John alone*, in any reasonable time, could have baptized the vast numbers that resorted to him : but every difficulty is removed on the supposition of their coming to him, *unto* or *into* the water, that he might with the greater ease and convenience *sprinkle* or *pour* water upon them.

Obj.

† The *greek particles* are used in such a variety of senses, that it is hard to fix their precise meaning, in the place where they occur, but from *circumstances* and the *scope of the passage*—thus *in* signifies, and is often rendered *in*, *at*, *with*, *by*, &c. and *us into*, *unto*, &c.

*Obj. 3.* ON Matt. iii. xvi. the Doctor argues thus, " If Jesus came up *out of* the water he must have been in it, where it is certain he was baptized. Mark says he was *baptized into Jordan*; not into the banks of Jordan but into the waters of Jordan. Now seeing such an expression as this will not suit with any other mode of baptism but that of immersion, and it cannot be said with any propriety that he was sprinkled into Jordan or poured into Jordan, but with great propriety may he be said to be dipped or plunged into Jordan; it follows that this necessarily proves the mode of baptism, as administered to our Lord, to be by immersion."

*Ans.* As the Doctor lays a stress on the words *out of*, I observe that Matt. iii. 16. may be literally translated thus, *Jesus when he was baptized went immediately up from the water*; —which words are so far from being a *necessary proof* of his being baptized by *immersion*, that they do not *necessarily* declare that he was at all *in* the water: consequently what the Doctor terms a necessary proof, amounts to no more than *bare supposition*; and to me it seems highly probable that Christ was not *under* the water at all, for there is not the least hint of his *rising up*, or of *John's* raising him *from a state of immersion*; which must necessarily have followed his being *immersed*, before he could be said to have come out of it: but as the text says; immediately upon his being baptized,

baptized, he went up *out of*, or (as the preposition may more properly be rendered) *from* the water, it seems to me that Christ only stood *in*, or *at* the brink of Jordan when *John* baptized him; and as his being baptized by *John* was *straitway followed by that of the Holy Spirit*, which descended from heaven upon him, (which baptism of the Spirit being, as I conceive, that which was eminently signified by John's baptism with water) it seems to me more congruous, and reasonable to suppose, that the manner of both was precisely the same, viz. that of *sprinkling or pouring*.

2. I MARVEL that a man of Dr. Gill's learning, and discernment should lay so great a stress as he here does, on Mark's using the particle *εις*, which it is well known often signifies the same as *εν*, *in*, and so Mark evidently uses them as, synonymous in the passage referred to, see chap. i. ver. 5, 8, 9. And here I observe also that it is as proper to say a person was *sprinkled with* water, as that he was *plunged into* water:—but it is further manifest from Acts viii. 38. that the particle *εις* is not intended to express a person's being *immersed*, or *put under* water, for we there read that *they* went down *εις into or unto* the water, both *Philip* and the *Eunuch*; yet surely *Philip* himself did not go under the water:—but if it be true that such an expression as *εις* will not suit, as the Doctor says it will not, with any other mode but immersion, it must necessarily



fairly follow that both *Philip* and the *Eunuch* were immersed together; and as it afterwards follows he (*Philip*) baptized him, the *Eunuch* according to the Doctor's reasoning, must have been *twice* immersed. —

“ Neither the words *pour* nor *sprinkle* make sense when substituted in the place of *baptize*; for the original expression is always *baptizing in* or *into* a thing: for instance *εἰς* or *εἰς* in or into Jordan; *εἰς* in water, *ἐν* the Holy Spirit—*εἰς* into the name, *εἰς* Moses, *εἰς* Christ, *εἰς* his death; —*εἰς* cannot be translated *unto* or *towards* in the case of baptism; because it would be nonsense to say that John baptized unto or towards Jordan: nor can *εἰς* be rendered *with* or *by* in this case; because it would be awkward to say John baptized *with* or *by* Jordan; besides *εἰς* which is used indifferently with it, cannot be so rendered.”

*Ans.* The words *pour* or *sprinkle*, may, in my opinion, be properly substituted in the place of *baptize*; but to render *εἰς* (when applied to the baptism of the Spirit) *in* the Holy Spirit, seems to me *awkward* indeed, and very *improper*; as, I think, must be manifest to every unprejudiced reader: *εἰς* likewise in the case of baptism, not only *can*, but I think ought to be rendered *with*

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|| Mr. *McLean*, in a late publication, entitled the commission given by Jesus Christ to his apostles, illustrated.

or *by*; for though it would be awkward to say *John* baptized *with*, or *by Jordan*,; yet, as Dr. Gill rightly observes, he did not baptize into the *banks* of *Jordan*, but into the *waters* of *Jordan*; and there is no more impropriety in saying that *John* sprinkled them *with* or *by* the waters of *Jordan*, than in saying he dipped them *in* or *into* the waters of *Jordan*.—*Eis* also, which is used indifferently with *ev*, may be rendered *by*, in this case, as it is in Matt. v. 35. where these particles are used together, as in the case of baptism, and are so rendered, and rightly rendered:—neither shalt thou swear *ev* *by* heaven, nor *ev* *by* the earth, nor *eis* *by* Jerusalem:—hence I think it plainly appears that Mr. *M<sup>c</sup>Lean*'s criticism is neither accurate, nor just.

*Obj.* 4. “*JOHN* was baptizing in *Enon*, &c. *John* iii. 23. The reason of *John*'s chusing this place is plain, it was for the conveniency of baptizing, and that because there was much water.—If this reason agrees with no other mode of baptism but that of immersion, as it does not, since *sprinkling* or pouring require not much water, it follows that this necessarily proves the mode of baptism by immersion.”

*Ans.* It does not appear from this passage that the evangelist intended to represent the mode of baptism in any way or manner whatever, as the Doctor here supposes; had this been his

his design, it is, I think, probable he would have represented the water as of a sufficient depth for that purpose, (for the force of the argument rests chiefly on that circumstance) but as it is not said *John* was baptizing in *Enon* because the water was *deep* in that place, or because there was much water *for the conveniency of immersion*, the Doctor's *inference*, in my opinion, is *mere hypothesis*, and very far from being (as he calls it) a *necessary proof* that *John* baptized by immersion.

—The *holy waters* which *Ezekiel* saw issuing from the *sanctuary*, were not *little* but *much*; yet when the angel had measured a *thousand cubits* from the place whence they issued, and caused the prophet to pass through them, they were only up to the *ankles*; and when he had measured a *thousand more*, they were scarce of a *depth* sufficient for immersion: and though *sprinkling* or pouring require not *much* water, yet some water was necessary for that purpose, as well as for the wants of the people who resorted to him.

WE read also that *John* removed from place to place, for the purpose of baptizing; and it seems to me probable that one of his reasons for it was, because in some places, the water failed and was dried up; and perhaps this was his reason for going to *Enon*, because as the *Greek* expresses it there were *many waters*, or *divers streams*, which were not so apt to fail him, and become dry as in some other places—in the *Greek* it is *πολλα υδατα*, *many waters*, as the same phrase



is rendered Rev. xix. 6.—and it seems to me unreasonable to suppose that the evangelist uses a *Hebraism* in this place; as if he meant to express *one single stream* by a *plural*, when he might, without any ambiguity, have more properly expressed it by the singular *ὕδωρ πολὺ*; the *Hebrew phrase* indeed is rendered by the *seventy* sometimes in the *singular* and sometimes by the *plural*; but John is not giving us a *translation* of the Hebrew word, nor writing for the benefit of Jewish Christians only, but rather for those of the Gentiles.—Upon the whole—that *John* baptized in *Enon* by *immersion*, cannot to be proved from *this place*; because the *evangelist* is entirely silent about it. *Who then will be so bold* as to say that he did? For what the *scripture* doth not *plainly speak*, no man is warranted *positively* to assert:—and as the text does not *in express terms* say that it was so, it is *possible*, and I think probable, that he had other reasons for going thither.—*Many waters*, and *deep water* do not express, nor import the very same idea.—Whatever then was the reason of *John's* going to *Enon* to baptize, nothing can from thence be inferred with certainty, that *John* baptized by immersion; *there being not a word in all the passage*, either about the *depth* of these waters, or the *mode* of baptism.

“ It is not, says a *learned commentator*, apparent from this place that baptism was administered by *dipping* or plunging, because *πολλὰ ὑδάτα* signifies rather many waters than deep; *several rivulets*,

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or the overflowing of *Jordan* in that place, as *Beza* notes; and *Enon* here mentioned is found, by travellers, to be very shallow." POOL'S ANNOT.

*Obj.* 5. "ROM. vi. 4. we are said to be buried with Christ by baptism into death; where baptism is compared to a burial, a burial with Christ, and a resemblance of his, which only can be made by immersion."

*Ans.* The *Doctōr's* gloss on this text, seems to me *unwarranted* and *erroneous*:—Neither in this place, nor in Col. ii. 12. is baptism called a resemblance of Christ's burial; rather if any *mode* of it be here declared by the apostle, it seems to be that of his *death*, and not of his *burial*, which are considered and spoken of in scripture, as two very distinct things, 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4.—The sins of believers were not expiated by Christ's burial, but by his blood.

I do not indeed think that the apostle intended in these passages to describe any mode of baptism whatever, for it appears plain to me that the apostle speaks only of a believer's being *spiritually* and *by profession* dead, buried, and raised up with Christ, from a death of sin to a life of righteousness.

LET us cite the whole passage as it stands in Rom. vi.—"Shall we, saith the apostle, *continue* in sin that grace may abound? God forbid;  
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how shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? know ye not that so many of us as have been baptized into Christ, were baptized into his death? therefore we are *buried* with him, *by baptism into death* (he says not into his *burial*) *that like as Christ was raised from the dead, by the glory of the FATHER, so we also should walk in newness of life:*—then he infers ver. 5. if we have been planted together in the likeness of his *death* (he doth not say of his *burial*) *we shall be also of his resurrection:* here also he changes the *tense*, thereby shewing that he is not speaking of any outward mode of baptism in the letter of it, but of a spiritual resurrection to a life of holiness; for else his words would, I think, have stood thus, *we have been* also of his resurrection, but he says not *we have been*, as referring to a *past transaction*, but *we shall be*, as declaring a future continued life of holiness, in those that have been spiritually planted into the likeness of his death; hence he adds ver. 6. *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him* (certainly not by an outward mode of it) *that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin;* for, as he further adds, *if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.*

2. It is observable, that the apostle through the whole passage *does not so much as once mention our being baptized into Christ's burial, nor into his resurrection*, which the Baptists by immersion and raising the person up from under the water mean



to exprefs : but he ſays again and again, baptized into his death, but though he has mentioned both the burial and reſurrection of Chriſt, he does *not ſo much as once mention our being baptized either into his burial or reſurrection.*—No mode of baptiſm then can with certainty be inferred from theſe words, unleſs that of Chriſt's death; and that in diſtinction both from his burial and reſurrection, for he mentions our being buried and raiſed with Chriſt only as the *effect*, or in *conſequence* of our being dead with Chriſt, by *being baptized into his death*; therefore the apoſtle *only infers* that we are buried with Chriſt. How? by being baptized into his burial? No; but by being baptized into his death.—So then the apoſtle ſpeaks of our being buried with Chriſt as an effect of our having been *previously baptized*, and not as any mode of it whatever: and I humbly conceive, the apoſtle would have ſaid *not his death* but *burial*, if he had intended to deſcribe baptiſm as a reſemblance of Chriſt's burial in the mode of it, but he ſeems to me carefully to avoid it.—To be baptized therefore into Chriſt's death means only, as I conceive, into the name and faith of Chriſt crucified; and the reſurrection afterwards aſcribed to the believer does not at all refer to the *mode* of baptiſm, for it appears to me evident from the ſcope of the paſſage the apoſtle ſpeaks, and only ſpeaks of a ſpiritual reſurrection from a death in ſin to a life of righteouſneſs, which ſpiritual reſurrection is by the faith of the operation of God who

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raised Christ from the dead; and therefore we are exhorted, Rom. vi. 11. *to reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*—For my part I cannot see any the least ground from these texts to warrant the mode of baptism by immersion. I am clear the apostle's words do not expressly declare it, and therefore, whatever others may have done, I dare not assert it—*every word of God indeed is pure*, but we are not warranted to say this of every *human gloss* upon it, though supported by great names, however *numerous*, and however *eminent* both for *learning* or *piety*.—Thus I have attempted to shew that the New Testament does not plainly declare baptism to have been administered by immersion from any circumstances attending the administration of it; so that, for any thing the scripture saith to the contrary, it might have been administered by *sprinkling* or *pouring*.

As the Baptists understand and apply Rom. vi. 3, 4, 5. to the mode of baptism, the words, I think, would stand thus:—"As many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death and burial, therefore we are buried with him by baptism into his burial, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also are raised up from under the water as representing Christ's resurrection for us; for if, by being covered with water, and, as it were, buried in it

it, by immersion, we have been planted together in the likeness of his burial ; we have been also in the likeness of his resurrection, by our rising up from under the water, and coming out of it."——This, I think, is a fair and just representation of the Baptists sense of the passage, who maintain that the apostle's words are intended to express the mode of baptism by immersion, as a resemblance (not of Christ's death, as crucified) but of his burial and resurrection :—and may I not appeal to the *conscience* of every candid and unprejudiced *Baptist*, that were he to give an account of baptism by immersion, as a resemblance of the burial and resurrection of Christ, he would represent it *in words and terms very different from those of the apostles* ?

*Obj. 6.* " THE best *lexicographers* do admit the leading sense of the word *baptizo* is to dip, or plunge in water ; if it be, we are not at all affected with its having, *on some occasions*, a *softer signification*."

*Ans.* THOUGH the best *lexicographers* allow this to be the leading sense of the word, yet they maintain, at the same time, that it signifies also to *wash* ; the point therefore in dispute, *entirely hinges on this*, IN WHAT SENSE the SCRIPTURE uses this word, whether to dip a person *in and under water*, or to *wash him with water*. MR. LEIGH, a critic of approved *ability* and *integrity*, in his *Critica sacra*, says ; " Though it be derived from *bapto*

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to dip, or plunge into the water ; yet it is taken more largely for any kind of washing, where there is no dipping at all : and he further says, *Christ* no-where requireth *dipping*, but only *baptizing*, which word importeth no more than *ablution* or *washing*, as *Hesychius*, *Stephanus*, *Scapula*, and *Budæus*, the great masters of the *Greek* tongue, make good by very many instances and allegations out of *classic* writers ;” Dr. *Featly*.—Afterwards, in the *supplement*, he plainly shews his own settled judgment concerning it ; for he there adds, “ I suppose that which I have quoted in my *Critica*, out of the *best lexicographers*, and what I here quote in the margin out of two learned doctors (*viz. Pocock* and *Lightfoot*) may suffice to take off what is objected by Mr. *Lawrence*, in his treatise on *baptism*, from the force of the word.”—Is it not then impertinent for any one still to urge ? in *Homer*, *Plutarch*, &c. it signifies to *dip* or *plunge*, for who denies it ? for the point in dispute hinges on this, has it *always* that sense, and *no other* ? for else it proves nothing against us :—especially if this be not its *constant meaning throughout the scripture* ;—nor indeed is its idea of dipping sufficient to justify the Baptists in their practice ; for if they are in the right, it must signify not *barely* to *dip*, but to *dip under water*.

Mr. *Parkhurst* also, in his *Greek lexicon* to the *New Testament*, after having mentioned the word *baptizo* as signifying to dip or plunge, he adds,  
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“but the *New Testament* does not use it strictly in this sense, unless, &c. and afterwards citing 1 Cor. x. 2. he says, *baptized by sprinkling*.”

GOULDMAN on the word *baptizo*, says, “To wash, to water, to sprinkle, &c.”—Ainsworth on the word *lavo*, says, “To wash, to bathe, to besprinkle.”—Thus the best *lexicons* assure us that *baptizo* and *lavo* do not only signify to dip or plunge, but also to wash and sprinkle.

BUT further, the inspired writers of the Old and New Testaments (whose *language* and whose *testimony* ought ever to be regarded by us, as clear, full, and decisive) do no-where, in my opinion, intend by the word *baptizo* to express merely, or chiefly an act of immersion or dipping, and much less to dip under water; but rather that of washing or sprinkling;—and this I hope to make appear from the following considerations:

FIRST, Because in several places they use the word *bapto* for the act of dipping, and so it is always rendered by our translators. But they do not so much as once use this word to signify the ordinance of *baptism*, but always its derivative *baptizo*; so that they do not use these words as synonymous, precisely importing the same thing.—Now if they had meant by the word *baptizo* to signify a proper dipping, it is, I think, hard to conceive

why the word *bapto* was never used by them to express that ordinance, which it is allowed doth most properly signify to dip; but I question if even *bapto* be always used, either by the *seventy* or in the *New Testament*, to signify a *total* dipping; in the following passages it seems to me to express a *partial* dipping only; Gen. xxxvii. 31. "dipped the *coat* in the blood," &c. Exod. xii. 22. "he shall take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood which is in the basin." Lev. xiv. 6. "as for the *living bird* he shall take it and the *cedar wood*, and the *scarlet*, and the *hyssop*, and shall dip them, and the *living bird*, in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water." Matt. xxvi. 23. "he that dippeth his hand with me in the dish,"—Rev. xix. 13. "a garment dipped in blood." If then *bapto* doth not always signify *such a dipping*, as to cover that which is said to be dipped; much less doth the word *baptizo* contain in it the idea of *complete immersion*. I suppose therefore the sacred writers do not mean by the word *baptizo* a dipping of the body under water.

Obj. "BAPTO would hardly have done so well, because the apostles and evangelists borrowing their Greek from the Old Testament, this word is never used there to express the *rite of washing or dipping a person's whole body*."

Ans.



*Ans.* BAPTO is twice used (Dan. iv. 33.—v. 21.) to express the manner in which *Nebuchadnezzar's* body was bedewed, or *wet with the dew of heaven*; and though this word signifies properly to dip, yet in these places it does not seem to be used in that sense, but for the *effect* of dipping only, and this also was by a mode of *sprinkling*.—Nor,

2. DOES it appear to me that *baptizo* is any where used in scripture to express the rite of washing, or dipping a person's *whole body*. The instance of *Naaman* is no certain proof of it; for it is not said he dipped *himself* (that word being not in the original) nor *his body*, much less his *whole body*, but the words are he *dipped* or *baptized* in Jordan:—besides, the *Hebrew* word is the same which the seventy, in other places, always render *bapto*, and, I think, no good reason can be given why they should render it *baptizo* in this place, unless they meant thereby to express an idea not contained in the word *bapto*, that is to say, the sense of *washing*; and this, I humbly conceive, plainly shews that *baptizo* in the *Greek* tongue, which doubtless the seventy well understood, it being then *a living language*, properly, signifies to wash, and not so properly, nor *barely* to dip. The context also required that the *Hebrew* word in that place should be understood to have the signification of *washing*; hence the *translators* render it, not, as in other places

places by *bapto*, but *baptizo*; and why they did not render it by the word  $\lambda\alpha\omega$ , which is generally used for a person's washing himself, was, I suppose, this; because finding the Hebrew word  $\לָבַשׁ$  in the text, they meant to express the idea of Naaman's washing himself by the mode of dipping, hence they rendered it *baptizo*:—for it is observable that this word is not so much as once used in all the *pentateuch*, but the word  $\lambda\alpha\omega$  to wash, and *bapto* to dip, often: nor do I remember that the word *baptizo* is used more than once in the Old Testament, viz. 2 Kings v. 14. except only Isa. xxi. 4. where it is plainly figurative; in which sense our Lord speaks of his sufferings as a *baptism*, for *his sweat was as it were great drops of blood, falling down to the ground*.

Now these three words are, I think, used in scripture with this precise difference, *bapto* to dip, and thence to tinge or dye, but never to wash;— $\lambda\alpha\omega$ , never to dip, but simply to wash, without any respect to the mode or manner of it;—*baptizo*, not barely to dip, but to dip in order to wash; so that where there is no washing there is, in my opinion, no baptizing: but if the body be covered with a garment, when immersed, it may be said indeed to be dipped or plunged, but cannot, I conceive, with any propriety be said to be washed or baptized; no part of the body being properly washed, but that which is bare and has no covering on it.

Further,

FURTHER, it does not appear from 2 Kings v. 14. that Naaman plunged or dipped himself under water, for the prophet's word is not טבל *bapto* dip, but רחצת *lazo* *wash*, so that baptize must, I think, there signify to *wash*, for it is said, he did according to the saying of the man of God. The main stress therefore in the use of the word *baptizo* in that place, does not seem to be laid on the *mode of dipping*, but on the end proposed by it, which was that of *washing*. And so *Naaman* plainly understood *Elisha*; for the prophet's word was not *dip* but *wash*, and thus his servants understood him, and urged it upon their master: "if the prophet, say they, had bid thee do some great thing wouldst thou not have done it, how much rather when he saith to thee, *wash* and be clean?" He therefore, in order to wash, went and dipped in Jordan; so then, had he made use of any other mode of washing he would have done what the prophet had bidden him; and this he did, in my humble opinion, by *sprinkling*; for he, being a *leper*, was ordered to wash *seven times*, alluding, as I conceive, to the manner in which *lepers* were cleansed under the law; for the *leper* was to be cleansed by the priest's *sprinkling* him with blood and water *seven times*, see Lev. xiv. 1. &c. But the *leper's* washing himself afterwards with water, is not said to be *seven times*, but *once or twice, only*. Therefore *Naaman's* washing himself, as directed by the prophet,



prophet, answers to no mode of the lepers cleansing, but to that of *sprinkling* only.

Now as *that sprinkling signified the purging of sin by the blood of Christ, and purifying the soul by the Spirit, applied to believers, through faith*; so, I conceive, the very same spiritual benefits were signified by the like mode of purification under the gospel: Thus when Ananias said to Saul, Acts xxii. *Arise, and be baptized, and wash away* (απολυσαι) *thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord*: in order to represent the washing away of his sins by the blood of Christ, the sprinkling of water on him, in the name of the Lord Jesus, seems to me the most proper and scriptural emblem of it; and not any act of plunging or washing the whole body, there being no mode of this kind, that I know of, whereby the washing away of our sins, by the blood of Christ, is signified, or represented to us, in all the scripture. The Baptists indeed tell us immersion, or dipping a person under water, is essential to baptism; but the scripture, in my opinion, lays the whole stress on a person's being *washed*, and not at all on his being *dipped*.—Some indeed affirm there is no washing but by dipping; but this, I think, is *rashly spoken*, for it is contradicted by every one's daily experience; for men may, and generally do wash their *face* every day *without dipping* it, and though they *dip* their hands in water, in order to wash them; yet the face

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is as completely washed *without dipping* it, as the hands are *by dipping* them.——

SECONDLY, The apostle, Heb. ix. 10. speaks of *divers washings* (Greek, *different baptisms*)—we are told indeed by Dr. Gill, and some others; this is not to be understood of *divers sorts* of washings, or baptisms, but of *different persons* or *things* washed; but surely the apostle meant, and ought to be understood to mean, what he plainly says; his words are not *diverse persons*, or *things* baptized, but *διαφορῶν βαπτισμῶν* *diverse baptisms*: they were not only *divers*, *many*, but they were also *diverse*, *different*; the latin *diversus* is ambiguous, but *διαφορῶν* not; for I find it no-where used to signify *many*, but, as it properly means, to denote a *diversity* or *difference*; and thence an *excellency* of one *person*, or *thing* above another; so it is evidently used Dan. vii. 3. four beasts, *diverse* one from another. Rom. xii. 6. where it is rendered *differing*. Phil. i. 9. things that are *excellent*, or that *differ*. Heb. i. 4. a more *excellent* name than *they*.—And whoever carefully attends, with a mind unbiaſſed, to the scope of the passage, Heb. ix. will, I think, be led to understand the apostle as speaking of *every sort of washing* FOR PURIFICATION under the law, (the chief of which was that of *sprinkling*) for else, I conceive, to prevent his being misunderstood, he would have *specified* the *particular mode* he intended by it;—and as he does not so much as name that mode of washing sometimes

rendered *batling*, but he again and again mentions *that mode*, and *that only*, which was by *sprinkling*; I suppose that the apostle in the passage under consideration, eminently refers to that mode of *baptism* or *washing*, which was by sprinkling; consequently the *sprinklings under the law* were *baptisms*, and are here so termed by the apostle.

AGAIN; *Moses* was commanded to wash Aaron and his sons, which is recorded Exod. xxxix. 4. xl. 12. but as the mode of it is not mentioned in either of the places, I think, no *humble christian*, who fears to incur the guilt of *adding* to the word of God, will presume to *affirm* what was the *precise manner* of it:—We are assured God gave all things in charge to *Moses*, which he willed and commanded the children of Israel to observe and do; and we are assured likewise that *Moses* was *faithful in all God's house*; therefore he neither *added* to, nor *suppressed a single word* of all which God had commanded him; consequently had this washing been meant of a *total corporal immersion*, (as some *Jewish* writers have supposed) *Moses* would doubtless have recorded it.—Neither is a *dipping* into, or under water, a *proper* washing; for *washing*, as we observed before, is evidently *more than bare dipping*:—a person may dip his hands or his whole body in water, without washing them; for after dipping, *their filthiness may still remain*, and consequently, though dipped, they are not washed:  
but



but *Moses* was commanded to *wash* them—and this he might do either in part or in whole without a total immersion;—I suppose when *Christ* washed the disciples feet he did something more than barely dip them.—Aaron and his sons likewise were ordered to wash their *hands* and *feet*; he doth not say their whole body, but their hands and feet only, when they went into the *sanctuary* to minister in the priest's office:—here also, it was not a *bare dipping* that was commanded, but *washing*.

LIKEWISE, when God separated to himself the tribe of *Levi* to minister unto him in the tabernacle, *instead* of all the *first-born* of Israel, (who represented, as I conceive, the whole church of the *first-born*, whose names are written in heaven, Heb. xii.) *Moses* was commanded to cleanse them by *sprinkling water of purifying* upon them, and then they were ordered to shave all their *flesh*, &c. Num. viii. 7.

MR. *Jenkins* indeed says, (as Dr. *Gill* had done before him), “The sprinkling, mentioned Num. xix. only *sanctified*, or *separated* FOR the purifying, from whence it is called the *water of separation*, Num. xix. 9. but the purification itself was performed by *washing the whole body in water*, ver. 19.” so says Mr. *Jenkins*.

BUT I read of no command given by *Moses*, in any part of the chapter, that the unclean should

wash his *whole body*; and therefore we have no scripture warrant to say that he did so; nor do I find any express command for it, in *all the five books of Moses*, but in *one place only*, and that is, Lev. xv. 16. and as it is expressly commanded in that particular species of uncleanness, and in no other, it seems to me reasonable to suppose they did not wash the *whole body*, on other occasions, but a *part only*, because they had no express command for it.

BUT Mr. *Jenkins* is, I think, very bold, in that he further adds, "The apostle's argument loses all its force without this explanation; for his (the apostle's) meaning is, that if the sprinkling, before mentioned, did not even purify the flesh, but only separated for that purification, how much more, &c."

HERE again the *apostle is made to mean what he doth not plainly say*; and for what reason I know not, except it be this; that the apostle's words have a plain tendency to disprove the notion of *corporal immersion* being essential to *baptism*. But Mr. *Jenkins*, in my opinion, has quite mistaken both *Moses*, and the *apostle*; for it appears to me, from Num. xix. that the water mixed with the ashes of the heifer, and sprinkled on the unclean, was, if not the whole, the *chief part* of his purification: for *Moses* says, ver. 9. *it*, the water of *separation*, (so called, as I conceive, because it *separated his uncleanness from him*) is a purification for sin, i. e. to cleanse him from it; ver. 13.

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The *unclean* that purifieth not himself, defileth the tabernacle of the LORD—*because the water of separation was not sprinkled upon him, he shall be unclean.* ver. 17. it is called a *purification for sin*; and again, ver. 20. he that is *unclean*, and purifieth not himself, hath defiled the sanctuary of the LORD;—the water of separation hath not been *sprinkled* upon him, he is unclean.—Is it not then clear and manifest, that the person is said to be purified from his sin, by the *sprinkling* of the *water of separation*, and not by the person's washing himself afterwards? for the water *sprinkled*, is again and again called a *purification for sin*; and is said to purify the unclean, by its being *sprinkled* on him; but *his washing himself* is not so much as once said to *cleanse*, or *purify from sin*.

THE reason also for this distinction, is, I think, evident, because the ashes of the burnt heifer, as well as the blood of calves and goats mixed with water and sprinkled on them, were *figurative* of the *blood of Christ* and of the *Spirit of God*, which by those legal shadows were represented, as *applied to sinners, by a mode of sprinkling*; for the purging of their sins:—but their washing themselves afterwards had no resemblance of either, but only, as I conceive, of the believer's *practical acknowledgement* of his *impurity*, and of his *purpose and engagement* to a *future holy walk and conversation*; or, as the apostle James speaks of *keeping himself unspotted from the world*: and therefore it was



was not performed by the priest, or some other clean person; but *by the person himself* who had been defiled, and that, in obedience to the divine command; *be ye holy, for I am holy*. And thus Paul writing to believers, who were declared to be *already washed, and sanctified, and justified* in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God; yet, to them he says, *Let us, (not excluding himself) cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God*.

NOR do I find any thing mentioned, Heb. ix. as a *pre-requisite* for purification in *distinction* from *that* which purified; (as Dr. Gill and Mr. *Jenkins* have supposed); and of that which is there said to purify, the apostle mentions only the *blood of calves and goats*, and the *ashes of an heifer mixed with water*, and these are said to purify not by an act of *immersion*, but of *sprinkling*.

BUT though Mr. *Jenkins* has ventured to assert, that "Without *his* explanation, the apostle's argument is weak, and loses all its force;" I, for my part; think quite the reverse; for the apostle's argument seems to me clear, strong, and conclusive, from his own words; and much better without Mr. *Jenkins's* explanation, than with it; for the apostle is not, in that place, telling the *Jews* what the *law* and *its ordinances* could *not* do, but what *it could do* for them, *as pertaining to the flesh*; for he admits that they answered the end for which God appointed them; for though the  
sprinklings

sprinklings of blood and water, &c. had not efficacy to purify the *soul* and purge the *conscience* from sin (for which they were never intended) yet they had virtue, by divine appointment, to purify the flesh from its *legal defilements* contracted by touching a dead body, &c. whereby they were cleansed and qualified to approach God in his tabernacle, under the law, with acceptance; and without fear of incurring the divine displeasure: but the *blood of Christ* has *much more efficacy* to purify their *souls*, &c. and they who are sprinkled with it, may, through faith, draw near to God for the remission of their sins, with the greatest confidence of being accepted with Him, through the blood of Jesus; which by its *glorious efficacy*, and the *appointment* of God fully expiates and cleanses them from *all* sin, but this the law could not do for them. Thus the apostle argues from the less to the greater, and his reasoning is intended, and *wisely* intended to persuade the *believing Jews* to *continue in the faith*; as also to encourage sinners at large, however guilty and defiled in themselves, to come to Christ that their sins may be *pardoned* and *purged* through faith in his blood, and by him to draw nigh unto God with full assurance of faith, not doubting but he will graciously accept them, through the death and mediation of his own Son, even *Jesus Christ, who once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God*. This, I think, is the

the plain scope and sense of the passage ; for if, says the apostle, the blood of calves and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean sanctifieth unto the purifying of the flesh ; *how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God ?*

THIRDLY, GOD having raised up and sent his servant *Moses*, to be the *deliverer* of his people from *Egyptian bondage*, and to lead them through the *wilderness* to the borders of *Canaan* ; the *children of Israel* are said to have been *baptized* unto *Moses* (as their *leader* and *commander* to follow him) *in*, or *by* the *cloud*, and *by* the *sea* ; 1 Cor. x. 2. but that they were properly *in* neither is manifest, for they walked *on dry ground* through the midst of the sea, and the cloud was high above them ; therefore they were all baptized by *sprinkling*, (as, I think, Mr. *Parkhurst* and others have rightly understood the passage) unless you can suppose persons to be baptized by water, *when they do not so much as touch the element* ; which *supposition*, in my opinion, is highly *unreasonable* and *absurd*. It is said indeed by some, “ here is an *allusion* to the custom of immersion, the Israelites being, as it were, covered by the cloud over, and the waters on each side of them.” But this is *barely asserted*, without producing any scripture in support of it, or giving any good reason for it :—and, in my humble opinion, there



there is no more reason to call the Israelites passing under the cloud, &c. an *allusion* to the custom of *immersion*, than to call *their eating the same spiritual bread*, and *drinking the same spiritual drink*, an *allusion* to *Christians eating bread and drinking wine at the Lord's table*;—but surely the *former* was as *real* and *literally* true with them; as the *latter* is with us;—besides, the apostle, as if foreseeing such kind of *evasions*, and to guard us against being deceived by them, changes the preposition *υπο* which he used in the first clause of the sentence, into *εν* in the next, which he needed not have done, but would, I conceive, have more properly retained it, had he intended to speak of the *manner* of their baptism, as *representing* the mode of immersion; for he says they were all *υπο* under the cloud, and then immediately adds, were all baptized unto *Moses*, not *υπο* under, or *by being under the cloud*, but *εν* by or *with* the cloud and *with* the sea, that is, with the waters of both *sprinkled* upon them; this I think, is the most proper and *natural sense* of the passage. This text therefore does, as I conceive, plainly shew that the *mode* of baptism is not by *immersion*, but by pouring or *sprinkling*, and consequently that the water was *applied to the subject*, and not the *subject to the water*.

AGAIN; The salvation of *Noah* and his family in the *ark*, by the *medium* of water, is represented by *Peter*, as a figure of our being saved by baptism, through the resurrection of Christ: here Mr.

*Martin* says, "In what *manner* baptism ought to be administered, and to *whom*, are abundantly evident to me, from this memorable passage;" he adds, "Is it not then at *least* determined that the proper subjects shall be applied to *the water*, and that water shall not be applied to such subjects?"—The passage strikes me in a very different light, from that which *Mr. Martin* conceives of it,—as to the *subject* we are agreed—but as to the *mode*, I think it rather represents *sprinkling* or *pouring*, than that of *immersion*; for *Noah* and his family being entered into the *ark* (which, as I conceive, was a figure of Christ) the water was then poured upon them, (and was not this also *applying water to them*?) whereby the persons in the *ark*, and together with the *ark*, were raised and carried above the waters, and thus they were saved by water, from being drowned with the rest of the world, who were not in the *ark*.

BUT it does not appear to me that the temporal salvation of *Noah* and his family by water, was a *figure* of believers salvation under the gospel, by *water-baptism*, for with what propriety can one type or shadow be made a *figure* of another of the same nature? *Peter* calls the baptism he speaks of, an *antitype* of *Noah's* being saved by water, which I take to be the *spiritual substance*, or *reality* of what *Noah's* temporal salvation signified; besides, had that been *Peter's* meaning,

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it would, I think, follow, that *water-baptism* is *absolutely necessary* to salvation, (which even Mr. Booth, as well as myself, disavows in strong terms) for *Peter* saith, *baptism doth now save us*; and though, he adds, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, this doth not in the least alter the case, for he declares baptism doth now save us, therefore in some sense or other he represents it as necessary to our salvation;—but if this text speak of water-baptism, and none are so baptized, but those that are *immersed*, will it not follow that no *Pedo-baptist* can be saved?—but I rather think that the apostle speaks of *spiritual baptism*, for he says, *not the putting away the filth of the flesh* (which is all that bare washing the body with water can do) but the baptism which he speaks of, is that which produces the answer of a good conscience towards God, which spiritual baptism (through faith in the death and resurrection of Christ) certainly does, but *mere corporal baptism* does not; and this sense of the passage well agrees, as I conceive, with *Paul's* plainer language on the same subject, when he says, *GOD our Saviour, according to his mercy, hath saved us,—with the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, Tit. iii.* and does not this pouring of the Spirit from on high upon believers, fitly answer to the pouring of water upon *Noah* and his family in the ark, as a figure of it?



FOURTHLY, As in the law of Moses, so in the writings of the prophets, who lived many ages after; the same spiritual benefits (which God had promised to confer upon his people, under the gospel, and which are now come unto us by Jesus Christ) are by *them* also, represented and said to be given and applied to us, in a way of *pouring* or *sprinkling*; but no-where, that I can find, by a mode of *dipping* or immersion.—“I, saith God, will *pour water* upon him that is thirsty, I will *pour my Spirit* upon thy seed,” Isa. xliv. 3. and again, “He shall *sprinkle* many nations,” Isa. lii. 15. and again, in Ezek. he saith, “I will *sprinkle clean water* upon you, and ye shall be clean, from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you, &c. I will put my Spirit within you, &c. Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, 27. Now if the prophet here alludes, as some have thought, to certain of the ceremonial *sprinklings* under the law, then it shews they were cleansed from their uncleannesses, under that dispensation, by a mode of *sprinkling*: but if the promise respected some future state of the church, (and that far more excellent than that of the Jews at their return from *Babylon*, viz. that of the gospel in the days of the *Messiah*) as I think, it plainly did, (though perhaps not yet fully accomplished) then it declares that God would still cleanse them, by a like mode of *sprinkling*, under the gospel also. Now this great evangelical promise must needs be fulfilled; but when was it fulfilled?

filled? unless when *John*, in the beginning of the gospel, baptized his disciples with water; and Christ, soon after, baptized his believing followers with the Holy Spirit, for the passage seems to me to have a respect to both; for the *sign* and *thing signified*, viz. *sprinkling* them with water, giving a *new heart*, and putting God's *Spirit* within them, are expressly mentioned. If then this glorious promise respect the state of the church under the gospel, as I think it did, (as well as those promises in Isa. xlv. and lii.) does it not plainly follow that water-baptism was by *sprinkling*; notwithstanding all that some learned men may have urged to the contrary, from the leading idea of the word *baptizo*? for we are here expressly told that God would cleanse his people from all their uncleanness by *sprinkling* clean water upon them;—those then whom God *so cleanses*, are *clean every whit*, and need not to be *immersed*, but *sprinkled* only: for the text assures us that God would cleanse his people by *sprinkling* clean water upon them. Do not those persons then greatly err, who venture to assert there is *no washing but by dipping*, and speak of *sprinkling*, as a religious mode of washing, by way of derision; though God hath expressly declared that he would *wash or cleanse* his people from all their uncleanness by *sprinkling* clean water upon them?—the *analogy of faith*, and the *harmony of scripture* also do, I think, require us thus to understand it. For,

AFTER *this manner* the *Jewish church* were first cleansed, and brought into a covenant-relation to God at *Horeb*, by the ministry of *Moses*, the mediator of that covenant; for they were all purified by *blood* and *water* being *sprinkled* upon them, see Heb. ix. 19. and with respect to this *antient type* and *mode* of purification, CHRIST, the Mediator of the *New Covenant*, is said to come by *water* and by *blood*; and his blood is called, the *blood of sprinkling*.—The prophet *Isaiab* also in a text before cited, (speaking of CHRIST) says, *he shall sprinkle many nations*, not the believing *Jews* only, but the *Gentiles* also; which *sprinkling*, seems to me from the context, more properly to respect the application of his blood, than the *bare* preaching of his gospel to the *Gentiles*; for the former is always effectual to cleanse them from their sins, but the latter not; because it is not always mixed with faith by them that hear it, and though the *sprinkling of water* be not expressly mentioned in Isa. lii. yet, by comparing it with the parallel text in Ezek. xxxvi. 25. it is, I think, reasonable to suppose, *that* also, is to be included in it.

THUS *Christ* having shed his blood for the redemption of his church, sanctifies and cleanses her with the *washing of water* (the emblem of the *Spirit*) by the word, which is the *ministration of the Spirit*, through faith; for *faith cometh by hearing, and hearing, by the word of God* preached unto them,



them; also Heb. x. 22. does, I think, speak of the same gospel blessings, and as applied to believers in the very same manner.—If some from the epithet *pure* water in this text, and *clean* water in *Ezekiel*, should rather think it means not an *outward* but an *inward* cleansing, even the inward purifying of the spirit; yet still the mode of application is always described by *sprinkling*, and not by *dipping*.

As then the application of evangelical blessings to the people of God is constantly represented by a mode of *sprinkling*, both in the law of *Moses*, and in the prophets; is it not reasonable to suppose that the same blessings should be represented by the like mode of application under the gospel? as I think they evidently appear to be; for else with what propriety could the prophets describe the application of the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom, (which were then *future*, but are now *present*,) as actually conferred on us, thro' faith, by a mode of *sprinkling* or *pouring*, as they certainly do? Now as one part of these promises, viz. the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, and the pouring of the Spirit upon believers has been exactly and literally fulfilled, it does, I think necessarily follow, that the other part of them must have been fulfilled likewise, for they evidently respect the *very same period* of the church; but if *John* baptized by *immersion*, when was that of *sprinkling* water  
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upon believers at any time fulfilled according to the promises?

AGAIN; Believers, in the New Testament, are said to be *washed*, where there is no *immersion*, but *sprinkling* only; for Christ, as the scripture testifies, hath *washed* us from our sins in his own blood; but the manner of it, is again and again represented by that of *sprinkling*: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, thro' sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and *sprinkling* of the blood of Jesus Christ," 1 Pet. i. and again, "Ye are come to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of *sprinkling*," Heb xii. and to this manner of being cleansed from sin, *David* had evidently a respect when he earnestly prayed to have his great sin, in the matter of *Uriah*, pardoned and removed from his deeply wounded and defiled conscience: Purge [me, says he, with *byssap*, (by which the typical blood of atonement was *sprinkled*) and I shall be clean; wash me, (he says not, and I will then wash myself) but wash thou me (and God's manner of washing, as we have heard, was by sprinkling) and I shall be whiter than snow.

SOME perhaps may say, as Dr. *Gill* has done, what has been mentioned in favour of sprinkling "are only resemblances and allusive expressions:"—how can that be bare *allusion*, which  
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contains a *promise of things future*—of good things to come? there is nothing *allusive* therefore in the passage, unless it may be said, by *hinting* at the manner of purifying under the law; God here shews us, and declares, that he would in the *same way cleanse* his people, under the gospel, even by that of *sprinkling*.—But they who can satisfy themselves with the learned Doctor's *evasions* and unwarranted assertions, may, I think, be classed with certain *Socinians* (though in points of greater importance) who being unable to reconcile *their notions* with the plain and obvious sense of scripture, endeavour to get rid of the difficulties that stand in their way, by calling them *allusions, allegories, &c.* although the language and sense of scripture, in those passages, be as clear and obvious, as that which in other places they readily admit in its plain and literal sense, without any figure whatever:—for though the prophets have plainly declared that God under the gospel would pour and sprinkle water upon his people, yet as this cannot be reconciled with that of immersion, the Doctor and others, treat their words as *mere allusions*, without having any scripture warrant for it.

I OBSERVE further, there is nothing, in my opinion, revealed, commanded, or appointed in the gospel, respecting the church of God, either as to the *matter* of salvation, or the *manner* of applying it to the subjects of grace; but what was either *foretold* or *promised* in the scriptures

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of the prophets ; or represented by the types and shadows of the law of Moses :—for what does the *New Testament* contain but the *substance* of those shadows, and the accomplishment of *antient prophecies* concerning *Christ* and his church? together with its additional *testimony*, and fuller explanation of those prophecies not yet accomplished ; but what *shall*, and *must* be fulfilled, *in their season*.

BUT further ; that the *Greeks*, by the word *baptizo*, did not mean to express *barely*, or *principally* an act of *dipping*, (and I question if they ever used it *properly* to *dip* or *plunge under water*) but rather that of *washing*, has, I suppose, been sufficiently shewn already, from Mr. Leigh's *Critica*, &c. and especially from 2 Kings v. 14. where it cannot, in my opinion, have any other signification from the obvious scope of the passage :—and the authority of the *seventy* in this matter, has with me more weight, than any *pagan classic*, or *lexicon* whatever, that may seem to have used the word in a sense *different* from *them*.—Nor do I think that the *apostles* and *evangelists* used this word *merely* because they found it in the *septuagint* ; but because it was a proper word to express what they intended by it, viz. a *slight dipping* in order to *wash*, (not to put away the filth of the flesh) but in a religious sense slightly to wash the hands ; or to wash a person by *lightly pouring* or *sprinkling* water upon him :—and that our translators conceived this to be the sense of the word wherever it occurs

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in the New Testament is, I think, evident; for they never render it *dip*, but always retain the Greek *baptize*, or else render it to *wash*. The *Dutch translation* therefore, which, as I am informed, renders it to *dip*, is, I think, faulty; for the word *baptizo* signifies more than to *dip*; their translation also confounds it with the word *bapto*; but these words are always distinguished as words of different import throughout the scripture.—Again, that *baptizo* doth not signify *corporal immersion*, is, I think, plain from Luke xi. 38. where it is said, *the Pharisees marvelled that Christ did not wash*; Greek, *baptize before dinner*; on which place *Lightfoot*, and other learned men understand it to signify not an *immersion* or washing of the *whole body*, but of a part, or of the *hands* only; (though *Dr. Gill*, and some others, think otherwise) but that *washing the hands* is all which was meant by it, seems to me plain from the question which, on a like occasion, the *Pharisees* put to *Christ*, when they said, “Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders, for they wash not their hands when they eat bread?” for had it been the custom to wash their *whole bodies* on such occasions, it would, I think, have been mentioned; but there is not a single word about washing their bodies, but their *hands* only, see Matt. xv. 2. Mark vii. 2, 3, 4, 5.—We are told likewise, at the marriage in *Cana of Galilee*, (see John ii.) there were set six water pots of water, *after the*

*manner of the purifying of the Jews* ; surely not for *corporal immersion* :—but most probably, for the purpose of washing their hands only.—And if the *washing* mentioned Eph. v. 26. 1 Cor. v. 11. 2 Pet. i. 9. be meant of baptism, as some suppose, it is, I think, evident the apostles and evangelists laid no stress on the mode of *dipping*, but on the *washing* intended by it.

FIFTHLY, *Baptizo* in the New Testament, as I conceive, signifies to *wash* or *purify*, by *sprinkling* or *pouring* ; so, I think, it means Acts i. 5. *John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit* :—the word *baptize* hath undoubtedly the same meaning in both parts of this verse :—As I, for my part, see no more reason to understand it *figuratively* in the *latter* clause than in the *former* :—some men may deny this, but I have *met* with no one as yet that has offered any good reason against it ;—to say immersion is implied in the word, is *begging the question*.

Now it is certain that believers were baptized with the Spirit, by its being *poured* upon them ; and as John's manner of baptizing is expressed by the *same word*, it seems to me necessarily to follow that the *mode* was the same in both ; especially as John's baptizing with water seems to have been a *sign* or *emblem* of Christ's baptizing with the Holy Spirit.—But baptism of the Spirit is always represented by the Spirit's  
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being *poured*, or *shed* on them, or *put upon* them, or *falling* on them, &c. all which expressions well agree with the act of *pouring* or *sprinkling*, but not at all with that of *dipping* or *immersion*.—As then *John's* manner of washing and purifying his disciples with water, is expressed by the word *baptizo*, and the manner of *Christ's* washing and purifying his disciples with the Spirit, is expressed by *the very same word*; doth it not plainly follow that the *mode was* the same in both? and this, in my humble opinion, gives us the *true idea*, and fixes the *sense* of the word *baptizo*, as it was used, and intended to be understood, by the *inspired apostles* and *evangelists*.—And all that the advocates for immersion have said, or urged to the contrary, from *Matt* iii. 16. *John* iii. 23. *Acts* viii. 38. *Rom.* vi. 3, 4, 5. or any other part of scripture, amounts, in my opinion, to no more than mere *hypothesis*:—and when they urge the *primary idea*, or leading sense of the word as signifying to *dip* or *plunge*, from *lexicons*, *Pagan*, or *Jewish writers*, (which have been, I conceive, sufficiently obviated already) together with the opinions of many *learned* and *good men*, of *different denominations*; yet, in my humble opinion, they do not, and I am persuaded never will be able, to *prove* that it has *that sense* in the *holy scripture*; or that the *inspired writers* intended to express an act of immersion by it; but rather as signifying to wash or cleanse, and that by a mode of *sprinkling* or *pouring*—and it seems to me indifferent which  
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of *these two* was made use of, because the *mode* is *the same in both*, and they only differ as to the *quantity*, and not at all as to the *quality* or *manner* of it: and thus the same spiritual blessings are by the prophets represented as applied or given to believers, *sometimes by sprinkling*, and *sometimes by pouring*.—As then the putting or pouring of the Spirit on believers is *baptism with the Spirit*; does it not necessarily follow, that *pouring* or *sprinkling* water upon them, is *baptism with water also*?

It is said indeed, by way of OBJECTION, that the pouring of the Spirit on the apostles is *called baptism* by way of *allusion* to that of *immersion*; because the *house*, in which the apostles were then assembled, was *filled with it*.—But *how doth the objector know that this is the reason why it is called baptism*? the scripture no-where gives this as a reason for it; consequently, *we have no warrant from scripture either to say, or believe it*.—That which God has plainly revealed, or testified in his word, I *readily acknowledge, and believe*;—but the *doctrines, opinions, and traditions* of men, *we are warned not hastily to receive*, but first to *prove* and *try* them by the *touchstone* of all religious truth, that is, by the holy scriptures; before we admit the writings and doctrines of men to be perfectly agreeable to the doctrine of God:—besides, there is this difference in the present case, the apostles were in the house before the Spirit filled it, so that there was nothing  
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like dipping in the case; but in immersion the place is first filled with water, before the person is put into it.

But further; the apostle *Peter*, being one of the twelve who were baptized with the Spirit, on the day of *Pentecost*; has, I think, plainly shewed there was no reference to any mode of baptism but that of pouring; for speaking to the people on that very occasion, he says, *this is that which was spoken of by the prophet Joel; and it shall come to pass in the last days, saith GOD I WILL POUR OUT of MY SPIRIT upon all flesh*—and upon my servants and upon my handmaids will I pour out of my Spirit, Acts ii. 17, 18. consequently the pouring of the Spirit on them, was their being baptized with the Spirit, without any respect to the place in which they were; whether in a house, or in the open fields.

AND this also *Peter* further shews, when the same Holy Spirit was afterwards given to *Cornelius*, and his believing friends, through the gospel's being preached to them, (which is the ministration of the Spirit). For as I began to speak, saith *Peter*, the Holy Spirit FELL on them, AS ON US, at the beginning; the apostle adds, then remembered I the word of the Lord *Jesus*, how he said, *John* indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit, Acts xi. 15, 16.—but here is not a word of the place being filled with the Holy Spirit:—to me therefore it is clear and manifest, that the manner of giving the Spirit, viz.  
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*by pouring it on them*, is that which is called *their baptism with the Spirit*, and not from the place or house being filled with it.—In like manner the Holy Spirit is said to *come on those twelve*, whom Paul laid his hands on, after they had been previously baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, Acts xix. 6.

OUR opponents further urge; That baptism of the Spirit is *confessedly figurative*. But *who are they that confess this?* none, that I can find, *of the sacred writers have any where done it*. And, in my humble opinion, baptism of the Spirit is so far from being *figurative*, that it is quite the reverse; that it is *spiritual baptism* is evident, but I cannot see it to be *figurative* in any sense whatever. I should be glad to be informed what it is a figure of; is it of the *mode or matter* of water-baptism? certainly neither; for baptism with water both preceded, and was itself a *figure* of *spiritual baptism*; for it is, I think, evident that John's baptizing with water *respected* and signified, as an *emblem*, Christ's baptizing with the Holy Spirit, the *substance and end* of it; even as the *bread and wine* at the *Lord's table* is the *visible sign*, as well as *memorial* of *Christ*, and *him crucified*. Therefore when *John* said, *I baptize with water*, but *he (Christ)* shall baptize you with the *Holy Spirit*; and when Christ, after his resurrection, said to his disciples, *John truly baptized with water*, but *ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit*,  
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the most natural and obvious sense of the words, I conceive to be this, John *outwardly* washed and *purified* his disciples by *sprinkling* or *pouring water* upon them; but ye shall be *inwardly* washed and *purified by the Holy Spirit being poured upon you*.

STILL it may be urged, that “the leading sense of the word *baptizo* is to dip or plunge in water; and if it be, says Mr. *Martin*, we are not at all affected with its having, on some occasions, a softer signification.” All this is nothing to the purpose, unless it can be proved that the scripture uses it in the sense of plunge, *which* I think it *does not*, and have given divers reasons for it, and the scripture sense of the word must needs be its true meaning, whatever may be urged to the contrary. By *softer signification*, I suppose, Mr. *Martin* means, simply to *wash*, where there is no proper dipping; and perhaps, he may even include that of sprinkling; for so some learned men understand it, and among these is Mr. *Parkhurst*, who, in his *Greek lexicon*, on the word *baptizo*, says *baptized by sprinkling*. Thus we see learned men are divided in their opinions about the sense in which this word is used in scripture.—But if the word, on any occasion, have a *softer* signification than that of dipping under water, (for dipping *in*, without going *under* water, does not express what the Baptists contend for) their arguments for immersion, (from the primary sense of the word) are, I think, greatly affected by it; for (as the *gospel*

is a *more mild and gracious dispensation* than that of the *law*) it is incumbent on them to prove that it has not *always* that *softer signification*, throughout the New Testament. But how will they prove this, unless by the plain and express words of scripture, or by some other circumstances attending the administration of baptism, which necessarily declare it to have been by immersion?—that the word *baptizo* is not *always* used in that sense, is, I think, granted by Mr. *Martin* himself, for he allows it to have *on some occasions, a softer signification*. Now I have examined and considered those texts on which our opponents lay the greatest stress, and it does not appear to me that immersion is plainly declared in any one of them; or that it can be inferred with certainty, from *circumstances*, or from any of the *prepositions* there made use of, that it has in those passages the sense of dipping under water; but rather, I think, the sacred writers have cautiously avoided, as if by design, every term or circumstance that would warrant any one to conclude they certainly meant and intended by the word *baptizo*, immersion, or dipping under water. If I am mistaken, I wish to be convinced of my mistake, for I can with great truth declare, that I am not conscious of being under the influence of any prepossession, or of any worldly bias whatever.

LASTLY, The most interesting and profitable ordinances of the gospel are, I conceive, as *simple*



ple and easy to be understood and practised, as its most essential and important doctrines of repentance, faith, and gospel holiness; I am sure that of the Lord's Supper is so.—Now baptism by sprinkling is no burdensome, or terrifying rite to any one; but the manner in which it is performed by the Baptists is attended with much outward ceremony, and often, as I suppose, with fear, and mental disquiet in the subjects of it:—for I have heard certain zealous Baptists acknowledge with regret, they have observed some who come to be immersed with an appearance of dread or reluctance; and that this is the case with many, can, I think, hardly be doubted, from the very manner of its being administered, with a peculiar dress provided for that purpose; and their being drawn, or let down into the water backwards; which unnatural posture of bathing, or putting a person under water, has, I think, a tendency to discompose their minds, and render them unfit to exercise that faith which is so necessary to be acted by them, on the occasion; and though it may not have that effect on all, it is probable that some are not a little affected by it.

HAD indeed the scripture directed, or given a command for this manner of dipping, they that do it would be justified in the practice of it; but I do not find that the scripture anywhere warrants the practice either by precept, or example. A dead person indeed may with propriety after this manner be laid in his grave, but

for a living person it is neither natural, nor *expedient*; seeing there is no express command for it. Is not this *manner* of dipping then a mere *human invention*, or act of *will-worship*, in administering the ordinance of baptism? But if this had been the manner in which *John* or the *apostles* baptized, it would probably have been mentioned in some place or other of the sacred writings; seeing in all other divine ordinances, especially those of the greatest importance, the scripture is very particular and explicit; and had baptism been intended to represent the burial of Christ, in the *mode* of it, I think it highly reasonable to suppose that the scripture would have expressly mentioned so important a circumstance;—and as *John* baptized often, if not always, in the most *public* places, and that both *men* and *women*; it seems to me necessary that some notice should have been taken both of the *MODE* and *other circumstances* attending it; if he baptized both *men* and *women publicly*, by immersion:—because, I conceive, the *manner* of it was *entirely new*, and *altogether without a precedent*; for there is nothing, that I can find, either in the *law*, or the *prophets*, to which it answers by way of *resemblance*.

WE read of many, both men and women, being ordered to *wash themselves*, who had contracted some ceremonial defilement, but I never read of their being *washed by another* for their purification, except only by an act of *sprinkling*.  
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And I believe the Baptists themselves are altogether at a loss to point out the manner of John's baptizing those who came to him for that purpose, whether *with* or *without a covering*. Nor can they, as I suppose, assign any good reason, why the scripture should be totally silent about it, but this only; that he baptized not by *immersion*, but by *sprinkling*; for the Jews were well acquainted with the *latter*, and often read of it in their scriptures, but of the *former*; I conceive, they were totally ignorant; it not being practised or commanded in their law.—Moses's washing Aaron and his sons, which we mentioned before, is by no means a proper resemblance of it; rather his cleansing the Levites, taken for the first-born, by *sprinkling* purifying water upon them; doth with much more propriety represent the mode of baptism by sprinkling under the gospel. Those Baptists also, with whom I have conversed on this particular, are divided in their opinions about it; none of them believe that a *proper bathing dress* was provided for them, on the occasion; but some have told me they supposed them to have been baptized in their *ordinary apparel*, others *without any covering at all*; but surely as *decency* must forbid the *latter*; so, I think, their *health* and safety will strongly militate against the *former*.

Now the silence of scripture in this point is easily, and, I think, rationally accounted for, and every difficulty removed, on the supposition that John  
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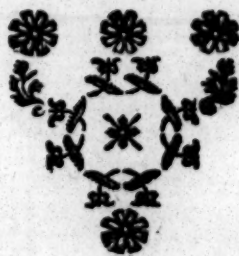


baptized not by dipping them under water, but by sprinkling water upon them; which also best answers to the most usual and significant mode of purification under the law; and agrees likewise to that manner of cleansing, by which God, in the scriptures of the prophets, promised he would cleanse his people under the gospel; which was by sprinkling them both with blood and water, to which a person's being *baptized into the death of Christ, by the sprinkling of water on him*, doth, in my opinion, very *fitly and fully* answer. — *As then the pouring of the Spirit on a believer is baptism with the Spirit, pouring of water on him must, I think, of necessity be baptism with water.*

THUS, I have given my opinion concerning the *mode* of baptism, with my reasons for differing from those who hold it to have been by immersion; but if any one can make it plainly appear either from the express words, or sense of scripture; that *John* or the *apostles* of Christ did *certainly dip persons under water* when they baptized them, or that they had a divine command for it, or that baptism was intended, by a *mode of immersion*, to represent *literally* the *burial* of Christ:—when this is proved, I retract all that I here publish against it; and shall, I hope, be ready to acknowledge I have been mistaken.

Now, as an error in *judgment* or *principle*, naturally tends to lead a person into an error in *practice*; so, I think, it has been with the *Baptists*  
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in this case (at least with many of them) who from their *mistaken opinion*, as I conceive it to be, and from a zeal for *immersion*, have been induced *rashly* to *censure* and *judge* their brethren who differ from them in this matter, so far as to charge them with being *obstinately blind*, or of *wilfully shutting their eyes*, in this point, against the most clear and exprefs doctrine of scripture:—and not only so, but to exclude them from their *churches* likewise, as persons *unworthy*, or as having *no right to commune with them at the Lord's table*:—this then shall be my next enquiry.



1881

My dear Sir,  
I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst. in relation to the matter of the  
and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration.  
I am, Sir, very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,  
J. H. [Name]

Very truly yours,  
J. H. [Name]



## C H A P III.

## ON THE IMPORTANCE OF WATER-BAPTISM.

**H**AVING in the preceding pages delivered my thoughts on the subject and mode of baptism, I proceed to consider its *importance*.

THAT *water-baptism* is not *absolutely necessary* to salvation is, I think, *generally* allowed by all parties.—For though the *church of England* in her office for the *baptism of infants*, as also in her *catechism*, seems to say otherwise, yet, I question if any of them *heartily believe* it, or will *deliberately* and *solemnly affirm* that no one can be saved without it.—Mr. Booth in plain and express terms declares, it is not his opinion; for he says, “So far from making *baptism* a *saving* ordinance, we do not, we cannot, consider any one as a proper subject of it, who looks upon it in that light.”

THE point, then, which I am now to consider, and which some strenuously insist on, (especially Mr. Booth, in his *apology* for the Baptists) is this, whether baptism, though not *necessary to salvation*, be not *absolutely necessary* to *christian communion* at the Lord's table. Mr. Booth says it is; we say, and believe that it is not. Let the oracles of truth, and fair reasoning out of the scriptures, *judge*, and decide, in this case, betwixt us.

Now the things which are chiefly signified, by a persons being baptized with water into the name of Christ, are, I conceive, these *two* :

FIRST : That thereby the baptized person makes an open or *public profession of faith* in Christ, as the *Son of God*, and as his *Lord and Saviour* ; whom thereby he *engages to follow and obey in all things*, as his *Leader and Commander*, through life.

SECONDLY : THAT his being *outwardly washed* with *water in the name of the Lord Jesus* ; does, as an emblem, *represent the washing away of his sins* by the blood of Christ, through the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit ; these two particulars, do, I think, comprehend all that is imported and meant by a person's being baptized into the *name and death of Christ*, according to the *scriptures*.

BUT as many godly persons are divided in their opinions concerning the *mode* of baptism ; so likewise some of the advocates for immersion, do, in my opinion, lay an unwarrantable stress on it : I purpose therefore to examine their reasons for excluding other believers in Christ, from their churches ; *merely* on the ground of their not having been *immersed*, as they have been.

Now they who make baptism a *term of communion*, as previously necessary to their being received

ceived among them, attempt, if I mistake not, to justify their conduct, from this *single proposition*, viz. *that the apostles received none*, as they suppose, *into their communion*, but such as had been previously baptized; but those are not baptized, in their judgment, who have not been immersed, or dipped under water; therefore *they cannot admit them to the Lord's table, without breaking the order of the gospel*; this, I think, contains the substance of what is urged by them in defence of their conduct.—To this I answer :

I. THE apostles have not declared *this* to be imported in the ordinance of baptism; for they no-where tell us that those, and those *only*, have a right to communion at the Lord's table, who have been externally baptized with water:—therefore there needs some stronger evidence than *barely* the practice of the apostles in this case, supposing it to have been as our opponents say, in order to prove that this warrants *them* to exclude believers from the Lord's table;—we are to follow the apostles only so far as they followed Christ, but Christ hath given no command for excluding believers from his table, on any pretence whatever.—Nor can that be any branch of christian duty which God hath not commanded; as, on the other hand, to do that which God hath not forbidden, is no sin in him that doth it; but God hath no-where forbid any of his churches to receive believers on Christ,



into their communion for want of water-baptism, therefore it is no sin in those that receive them; but God hath expressly commanded the saints to receive all that believe in his Son Jesus Christ:—therefore it is sin in them, that refuse to do it—they then who reject any professing christian, whose walk and conversation is becoming the gospel, do it without having any command from God for it, or *example* of it; for we no-where find that the apostles rejected any such, or commanded others so to do;—I read of none that are said to be excluded, or cast out of the christian church, in the apostolic writings; but on account of *infidelity, heresy, or gross immorality*; therefore not for any difference about baptism, or any *carnal rite* whatever.

It will perhaps be said, christians *then* were all of one mind in this point, and had no dispute about baptism in the apostolic age:—This remains to be proved, for the scripture no-where declares that it was so;—we know they had differences and disputes about many points, and for ought we know to the contrary, about this also:—we are assured, in the church of *Corinth*, there were strifes and *contentions* concerning the persons who had baptized them, insomuch that they seem to have been divided into several parties or *factions*; which made the apostle *Paul* say, *I thank God that I baptized none of you, except a very few, whom he there mentions:—and he further adds, for Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach*

*preach the gospel.* But every one of those who said, *I am of Christ*, were perhaps not baptized at all; and this seems to have been the case with some of the church of Christ, at Rome; the apostle's words do, I think, plainly imply it, when he says, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Christ, were baptized into his death," which *phrase* will be more fully considered in its proper place.—Also Acts xi. 19—24. we read of many preaching the gospel in divers places, and though it is said the hand of the Lord was with them, and that many believed and *turned* to the Lord, &c. yet we read not a word of their being *baptized*.

THE apostle also has, I think, plainly pointed out to us *all* that is necessary for the christian to follow after, in order to his real edification and salvation; when he says, "*in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith, which worketh by love:*"—and again, "*but a new creature:*"—and again he says, "*but keeping the commandments of God,*" see Gal. v. 6.—vi. 13.—1 Cor. vii. 19. But some may say, what are those commandments? is not *baptism* one of them?—the apostle *John* shall answer, *This is his (the Father's) commandment that we believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ; and love one another, as he (Christ) gave us commandment; for this, faith Christ, is my commandment, that ye love one another.*—And to this only, the apostle seems to have had respect,

respect, in his epistles to the churches of Christ, both at *Ephesus* and at *Collosse*; as that which determined him to *regard*, and *pray*, and *give thanks* for them, as his fellow-saints, and *faithful brethren* in Christ; without taking the least notice of their having been baptized; see Eph. i. 15. Col. i. 4.

It is observable also, that in his epistles to *Timothy*, though he gives that *evangelist* many *directions* and *solemn charges*, how to behave himself in the church of God; he does not say a single word to him about *baptism*; the same may be observed likewise in his epistle to *Titus*. Is it not then reasonable to suppose that our apostle did not think so highly of *water-baptism*, nor urge it on believers, as some do in our day? and his chief reason for it, seems to have been this, that when Christ called, and sent him to preach his gospel unto the Gentiles, he gave him no command for it.—Why then, some may say, did he baptize at all? Probably for the same reason that he *circumcised Timothy*, though it is certain he had no commandment for it:—but he did it in condescension to the prejudices of certain Jews, who as yet could not be prevailed on to hear Christ preached to them by an uncircumcised Gentile:—but when *Paul* observed what a stress some seemed to lay on it, and fell into *carnal disputes* and *contentions* about it; he thanked God he had baptized but few of them, least any of them should say he had baptized in his own name,



name; and then he told them plainly that Christ did not send him to baptize, but to preach the gospel;—and for a similar reason he would not permit *Titus* to be *circumcised*, though it seems to have been recommended to him, and strongly urged by some of the other apostles, whom he styles *pillars* among them.

BUT though it be admitted they all were of one mind about baptism in the apostles days; yet the Lord foresaw what differences and disputes would arise among his people on this point, in after ages; and had it been his mind that any one should be excluded from his table on that account, he would undoubtedly have commanded that no Pede-Baptist, or unbaptized person, should be permitted to eat bread at his table; even as God had expressly commanded, under the law, that no uncircumcised person should eat of the passover:—for surely our rule of duty under the gospel, is as full and explicit as that given to the Jews under the law.—Is it credible that every branch of duty necessary for the acceptable worship of God, should be delivered in the most *clear, guarded, and perfect manner*, under the law, which was a *dark* dispensation of *types and shadows*; and that any part of christian duty should be left in a state of darkness and uncertainty, under the gospel, where the true light now shineth:—every thing, in my humble opinion, which is necessary to our salvation, and the communion of saints for their edification and establishment

blishment in the faith ; is, in the New Testament revealed and commanded us with all plainness, and easy to be understood by every *upright*, and *humble* enquirer after truth ; by *hearing* and *reading* the holy scriptures, with *meditation* and *prayer* ; for if any one, saith Christ, *will do his* (the Father's) *will*, *he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of GOD, or whether I speak of myself* :—and again he saith, *this is the condemnation that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil ; for every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd ; but he that doeth truth cometh to the light, &c.* for it is written in the prophets, *they shall be all taught of GOD ; every one therefore*, saith Christ, *that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me.*

AGAIN ; Whatsoever or whosoever, by the *commandment* and *authority* of the Lord Jesus, excludes a person from communion with his people in the church militant ; doth, in my opinion, exclude him also from communion with his saints, in the church triumphant ; and this seems to me the meaning of our Lord's words, when he saith, *Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven—and whosoever sins ye retain they are retained* ;—for nothing, I think, can be more plain than this, that he who hath a right to communion with Christ, hath a right to communion with the whole body of Christ, i. e. the church, whereof he is the common  
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head of spiritual life, and influence to every member of it:—nothing therefore is necessary, in my judgment, to church-communion here, but what is necessary to salvation hereafter; for whatever gives the believer in Christ, a right to the blessings of life and glory through him; must surely give him a right to all christian privileges in the church on earth.—Can it be supposed that God would grant to his faithful people the *Holy Spirit*, as an *earnest* of the *heavenly inheritance*; and at the same time withhold from them the provisions of his house on earth, for their support and comfort in the way to it?

It is, I think, a *maxim* in civil law, and a very reasonable one too, that he who hath a right to an earthly mansion or inheritance, has a *legal* right to all the ways, paths, and avenues that lead to it; for his right to the *latter* depends intirely on his having a right to the *former*: and thus every one who has a scriptural right to Christ, has an undoubted right to every *gospel* ordinance or appointment which *leads* to Christ.—And as this is highly reasonable in itself, and perfectly agreeable to the plain tenor of scripture, no one, I think, ought to disbelieve it; *unless* God had somewhere in his word, *expressly declared the contrary*; but I find no such thing in all the New Testament: therefore for any christian church to exclude from their communion at the Lord's table, those that are true believers in Christ Jesus, and evidence

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them;



themselves so to be, is, in my opinion, (whatever may be their pretence for it) that which the scripture calls, and rightly calls, *schism*; for it evidently causes a *division*, and *breaks the peace*, and harmony of the church of Christ :—*it is building up a partition-wall*, and *causing a separation* between the members of Christ, in the church militant, *as if Christ were indeed divided*—That dividing wall which once subsisted between Jew and Gentile, Christ, as the apostle tells us, has broken down; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments *contained in ordinances*; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace :—and thus believers in him, are all one in Christ Jesus; and I nowhere find it appointed, or commanded in the gospel, that those who believe in God, and hold the Head Christ, and walk in love; should be divided or separated into different parties, or factions on any account whatever.

I READ but of one in the *New Testament* who refused to receive real believers into his church or communion, (for so I think it must be understood) but though an apostle *wrote* to him, and *exhorted him to receive those brethren*, yet *un-awed*, and *unmoved* by all the apostle could say, he obstinately persisted in rejecting them; and when those of his own communion, who, it seems, *disapproved of his conduct*, and reasoned the case with him, would have received the  
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brethren whom the apostle had recommended: this *haughty* prelate went so far as to cast them out of the church also.—But the character which *John* gives of this *Diotrephes*, is such; as I am persuaded no christian will admire, or wish to be found an imitator of.—I do not mean to apply this to any Baptist church, or teacher; though it appears to me the conduct of those who reject real believers from their communion (merely on account of a difference between them on the mode, or subject of baptism) does, in that particular, too much resemble *his*.

Now, as Mr. *Booth* in his *apology* for the Baptists, has said a great deal to justify the practice of those Baptist churches, who refuse to admit such persons whom they count unbaptized believers, to sit down with them at the Lord's table, I shall make some remarks on that performance, and endeavour to shew that those who admit all believers, as such, though they have not been baptized by immersion, are sufficiently warranted from the scriptures so to do.

As to the supposed tendency of such a practice, and the strange cases which Mr. *Booth* imagines might happen from it, I shall take no notice of them; it will be time enough to consider them when they are verified by real facts, if such supposed cases should ever come before them:—nor shall I pay the least attention to what he urges from the practice of any church

since the apostles days, for whatever may not be proved from their writings, is not to be received by any christian church whatever, as containing the certain doctrine of *divine truth* according to the scriptures ; and this Mr. Booth himself seems to allow, for he says, “ The *Bible* is the rule of our faith, and practice in things pertaining to religion ;—our *complete* and *ONLY* rule in all things relating to the instituted worship of God and the order of his house.” Page 20.

In this point, I entirely concur with Mr. *Booth*, that the scriptures contain a clear, and *complete revelation* of the *divine mind* and *will*, in all things that respect the *true* and *acceptable worship* of God, in *his church* ; both with regard to *faith* and *practice* ; *order* and *discipline*. Thus we agree to refer the matter in dispute between us, to the judgment and *decision* of the *sacred writings* ; and therefore I shall pay little or no regard to the numerous authors which Mr. *Booth* has cited on the occasion, with a view to strengthen and establish the opinion he so zealously contends for :—for if the scriptures be plain and full to the point in question, there is no occasion for them ; and if the *apostles doctrine* and *testimony* be not *clear*, and *decisive* ; it is impossible for the most learned and pious men upon earth to settle it, or to satisfy our minds concerning it :—all they can do for us, is only to open, apply, and set before us, that which God hath *already revealed*,  
*commanded*,



*commanded, and testified in the inspired writings of the Old and New Testament.—To the law and to the testimony: If they speak not according to this word, there is no true light in them.—Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee and thou be found a liar.—All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works; and thus, as Christ had promised his disciples; he poured upon them the Holy Spirit, that thereby they might be led and guided into all truth.*

*Objection.* “THE sentiment (viz. that of admitting *all believers* to the Lord’s table) which our brethren adopt, if suffered to operate in its full extent, would exclude both baptism and the Lord’s supper from the worship of God—for, according, to them, the grand, the *only* query, that is really necessary, relating to a candidate for communion, is, has God received him?—is he a *believer* in Jesus Christ?” p. 40.

*Answer.* THE consequences which Mr. Booth supposes might, or would probably follow, from the *free admission of believers*, as such, to the *Lord’s table*; as if it opened a door to errors, &c. are, I am persuaded, all *imaginary*, and groundless; for Christ the Head of the church knows how to secure his own honor, and maintain in his church, by the grace and power of the Holy Spirit,

Spirit, a due respect to all his ordinances, without the *uncommanded aid*, and *officious zeal* of any of his ministers :—nor is it reasonable to suppose that they who are received of him, as his believing people, and walk uprightly before him ; will of themselves be inclined to despise, or trample upon any of *his* ordinances, which he has designed and appointed for *their* own *edification*, and *comfort* ; nor will their *gracious* and *faithful Lord* and *Saviour* suffer them so to do, in any considerable degree, *much less forever* ; for *the meek will be guide in judgment, and the meek will be teach his way*. Psalm 25.

2. AND ought not this (“ Is he received of God ? Is he a believer in Jesus Christ ?”) to be the only query ?—Where doth the scripture require any thing more ?—for if the candidate be received of God, a believer in Christ, and give sufficient evidence that he is so, doth not such a one *put on* the Lord Jesus Christ both by *profession*, and by a *holy imitation of him* ? and doth not this include all that is meant by baptism ? for, as we observed before, “ in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision ;” and that the same may be said of baptism also, is, I think, evident from the following words, “ but a NEW CREATURE ; and as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy ;” who then can reject such from the Lord’s table, without rejecting Christ also ? for my part I *dared* not do it, unless *I had an exprefs command*  
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from God for it; but I no-where find such a command given to the church of Christ, in all the Bible.

*Obj.* 2. "It has been, says Mr. *Booth*, the sentiment and conduct of the christian church in every age, to receive none but baptized persons to communion at the Lord's table." p. 8. — "The ingenious author of the *Pilgrim's progress* was one of the first in this kingdom who dared to assert that the want of baptism is no bar to communion." p. 27.

*Ans.* We appeal to the Bible:—The real sentiments and conduct of the *true church of Christ*, and of every sincere christian likewise, are plainly revealed, and faithfully recorded in the holy scriptures; which Mr. *Booth* himself acknowledges to be the *only* rule both of faith and practice, to all christians: why then doth he here refer us to the opinions of men in the several ages of the professing christian church, for the truth of his sentiment and practice, but for this reason only; because he could not produce any plain scripture-evidence in support of it?—But whence did those professing churches receive their sentiments on this point? Not from any express warrant or command given them in the holy scriptures: for the scripture hath no-where said, "receive none but baptized persons to the Lord's table," &c. neither can Mr. *Booth* produce a single text where it is expressly commanded,



manded that no unbaptized person, though a believer in Christ, shall be admitted to the holy table. May we not then justly apply to himself what he says of those that receive such believers among them? “Do *they* argue in defence of their practice, or endeavour to prove their point, not by express commands, or plain facts recorded in the New Testament, but by *inferences*, &c?” so doth Mr. *Booth*, he also argues from *inferences*, and not from *express commands* or *plain facts* recorded in the *New Testament*; for where doth he find any express command to reject believers from the Lord’s table?—Mr. *Bunyan*, he says, *dared*, &c. I cannot see any thing like *daring*, or *presumption* in Mr. *Bunyan*’s conduct on the occasion; for that which he did was not forbidden of God in his word; but rather, in my opinion, he had a plain command for it.—Nor do I think Mr. *Booth* has properly answered, or *refuted* Mr. *Bunyan*’s reasons for it, and arguments in defence of it. *Hezekiah* is not blamed, for admitting those *Jews* to the *passover*, though not *purified* according to the law.—Nor *Moses* for not requiring the *Jews* to circumcise their children in the *wilderness*, and yet allowing them to partake with him in the ordinances of the sanctuary, though their uncircumcision was counted a reproach to them.—“*God will have mercy and not sacrifice.*”

Obj. 3. “THAT only is baptism which Christ has appointed as such, that therefore which  
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*essentially* differs from what he appointed, cannot be baptism," p. 28.—"Either Christ has informed us in the New Testament what baptism is, and what is requisite to communion at his table, or he has not:—If the former, we cannot admit any thing as baptism which we believe is not so; nor receive any to communion but those whom we consider as qualified according to his direction," &c. p. 70.

*Ans.* I CANNOT find that Christ ever said a single word to his apostles about the *mode* of water-baptism:—And that *John's* baptism *essentially* differed from that of the apostles (after the resurrection of Jesus) is, I think, evident, both as to the *object*, and the *subjects* of it.—*John* baptized his disciples *before they believed* in Jesus, the apostles none but believers in Christ, and after they had made a profession of faith in him; *John* is not said to baptize in the name of Christ, but the apostles always baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus; thus their manner of baptizing essentially differed. We reasonably suppose also that *John* baptized none but Jews only, the apostles baptized both Jews and Gentiles that believed in Jesus.—*John's* baptism and ministry obtained its end, and consequently ceased when Christ was made manifest to Israel; for *John* himself declares, for this end, viz. that Christ might be made manifest to Israel, therefore, saith he, am I come baptizing with water; and this, I think,

he plainly signified also, when he further said, *be (Christ) must increase, but I must decrease.*—And this *John* evidently spoke with reference to baptism, see John iii. therefore no believer in Jesus can, in my opinion, be baptized with the baptism of *John*, since that glorious and ever memorable day of Pentecost, when Christ baptized his disciples with the Holy Spirit:—hence, I think, it appears what was said of the Pharisees, that they rejected the counsel of God against themselves, in not being baptized by *John*; cannot, with truth or propriety, be applied to any true believer in Christ, as the Son of God and Saviour of the world.—Moreover when Christ said to *John*, with respect to his own *personal baptism*, “Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness,” the *us*, in that passage respected, I conceive, none but *John* and himself, or rather Christ only: for who but Christ alone ever fulfilled all righteousness?

2. NOR did Christ say a word to his apostles, that I can find, about any *qualifications* for the admission of believers to his table; their *hearts were purified*, and consequently prepared for it, *by faith*, and that before they were baptized.—They therefore who reject believers from the Lord’s table, do it, in my opinion, without any warrant from him for it.

Obj. 4. “THAT baptism was an ordinance of God—that it was administered to multitudes, before



before the sacred supper was heard of, or had an existence, are undeniable facts." p. 31.

*Ans.* THAT *John's* baptism was administered to multitudes prior to the institution of the sacred supper, is not denied.—But can Mr. *Booth* produce a single instance of any one being baptized *into the name of Christ*, before its institution? on the contrary, it is evident from scripture that the Lord's-supper was instituted, and a command given by him to his disciples, to observe it in remembrance of him, before Christ had actually suffered, or given any direction, or said a word to his apostles about *baptizing believers in his name*; nor did he at that time, or afterwards caution or warn them, not to admit any one to the sacred supper before they had been baptized; even the apostles themselves were, I conceive, partakers of it, before they had been baptized into his name or death;—but when the *passover* was instituted, there was an express command given to the Jews, that no uncircumcised person should eat of it; but there is no such charge, or command given, in the New Testament, against the admission of believers to the Lord's-supper, for want of baptism; consequently no christian church has a divine warrant for it, nor can they, in my opinion, be justified in the practice of it.—I conceive also that those twelve disciples mentioned Acts xix. usually assembled and brake bread with the rest of their believing brethren, before they had

been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus; and such a disciple *Apollos* seems to have been, who taught diligently the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of *John*, until *Aquilla* and *Priscilla* had instructed him in the way of the Lord more perfectly.—I therefore suppose there were disciples in the christian church, that believed in Jesus, who were not baptized in the name of Christ as others had been; and yet had communion with them in breaking of bread, which accounts for the apostle's expressing himself after this manner, "*as many of you as have been baptized into Christ,*" Gal. iii. and *so many of us as have been baptized into Christ,* &c. Rom. vi.

*Obj. 5.* "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized?" that is, that whoever of us that profess baptism into Christ, profess baptism into his death, as the thing intended by it. The *us* there, is the generality of christians, distinguished usually by that word from heathens; as Rom. xiv. 7. 1 Cor. viii. 6. to us there is but one God, &c. that is, we christians profess all and generally so; and his scope being to shew how sanctification flows from being in Christ; his argument is drawn from a general of the *us* of christians—so that this expression *as many of us*, imports not, as if some were, and some not, baptized; for then his argument of sanctification had not been binding to the generality of christians." p. 78, 79.

*Ans.*

*Ans.* ARE not all that profess faith in Christ, obliged by that profession to holiness of life, though they be not baptized? and do not many *Pedo-baptists* evidence their being in Christ, and dead to sin, by the faith of Christ; and manifest their obedience to him in a way of righteousness unto holiness, as much as those that have been baptized by immersion? or will Mr. *Booth* take upon him to say, we, the Baptists are better christians, and holier than they?—if not; then *Pedo-baptist* believers, though they may not be able to boast of having the *sign* and *shadow* of sanctification in the outward form of water-baptism, yet it is evident they have the *reality* and *substance* of it. The general promise also given to believers, ver. 14. viz. *Sin shall not have dominion over you*; is not because they have been baptized, but because they are under *grace*.

THE most therefore that the Baptists can make of the apostle's argument for sanctification, from their having been baptized by immersion (supposing them to be in the right, though I think they are not) amounts, I conceive, to no more than this, that the Baptists have one argument for holiness *more* than their *Pedo-baptist* brethren, and are therefore under an additional obligation to a practical conformity to Christ, and are bound to excel them in true holiness both of heart and life; *for to whom much is given,*  
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*of the same shall much be required.* But will Mr. Booth deny that the fruits of real holiness are as abundantly brought forth by some whom he counts unbaptized, as by any of his Baptist brethren? and shall not then their want of baptism be counted for baptism? and may we not apply, on this occasion, the words of the apostle, only changing the word *circumcision* for *baptism*—*He is not a christian who is one outwardly, neither is that baptism which is outward in the flesh, but he is a christian who is one inwardly, and baptism is that of the heart in the Spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God.*

2. THE apostle's words in the texts cited from Rom. xiv. 7. and 1 Cor. viii. 6. are very different from those in Rom. vi. and therefore are not pertinent to the point in question; but we may best understand their meaning by referring to several passages where the very same phrase occurs, and in most, if not all of them, it evidently means a *part only*, and *not the whole*.—Mark vi. 56. "*As many as* touched him were made whole."—John i. 12. "*To as many as* believed gave he power," &c.—Acts ii. 39. "*As many as* the Lord our God shall call."—Rom. viii. 14. "*As many as* are led by the Spirit," &c.—Gal. iii. 10. "*As many as* are of the works of the law," &c.—Acts xiii. 48. "*As many as* were ordained to eternal life believed," &c.—Phil. iii. "Let *as many of us as* be perfect," &c.—Rev. ii. 24. "*As many as* have not  
this

this doctrine," &c.—Hence it is plain this phrase is used in scripture as in common language, to denote, not the *whole*, but a *part* only.

*Obj.* 6. "BAPTISM is not *fundamental*, is not *essential*;—True, says Mr. Booth, if limited to the foregoing cases (viz. to our justifying righteousness, our acceptance with God, &c.) but are we hence to infer that it is not necessary on *other accounts*, and in *other views*?" p. 90.

*Ans.* WHAT those *other accounts* and other views are, to which Mr. Booth here refers, he doth not tell us:—that he counts baptism *necessary* to communion with saints at the Lord's table, is evident from the whole design of his apology; but hath Christ, or any of his apostles said this? If not, and I no-where find that they have, how will Mr. Booth make it appear that it certainly is so? Can he point me to a text which plainly declares that *baptism*, or any thing else, is necessary to a believer's communion with the church of Christ here, which is not also necessary to his salvation hereafter? The scripture does no-where, in my opinion, represent any thing necessary to a believer's visible communion with saints at the Lord's table, which is not absolutely necessary to his salvation;—and therefore I read of no repenting sinner being separated or excluded from the visible church of Christ, for any error or gross offence

offence but what, without repentance, would exclude him from the kingdom of God.

PETER said to his Jewish hearers at Jerusalem, "Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, for the promise is to you," &c. But will Mr. *Booth* infer from thence that water-baptism is necessary for the remission of sins, and consequently for justification also? or that the sins of a true believer in Christ are not remitted before he is baptized? or do believers receive the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, as in the days of the apostles they usually did, some before, and some after baptism? but if true believers now may, and do receive remission of sins, and the saving gifts of the Holy Spirit, both before, and without water-baptism, which, I am persuaded, Mr. *Booth* himself will not deny, whence its necessity as to the outward form and letter of it; but only as it imports a visible and outward confession of Christ before men? according to that in Rom. x. 9. *If thou shalt confess, &c.*

MR. M<sup>c</sup>LEAN, *whose late publication we have* had occasion to mention before; in page 130—132, says, "Baptism is intended to be a sign of *regeneration*, or that the person baptized is *born of the Spirit*," "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," John iii. *Water* here undoubtedly



edly means the water of baptism, for it is distinguished from the *Spirit*; so that to be *born of water* is to be baptized, even as to be *born of the Spirit* is to be regenerated; and as the former is connected with the latter, and termed a *birth* with reference to it, it must be the visible sign or representation of the spiritual birth:—this is farther evident from Tit. iii. 5. Two things are here pointed at. One is baptism, called the *washing*, or rather (λυσον) *laver of regeneration*, because it is the sign of regeneration, the other is regeneration itself, or the renewing of the Holy Spirit, which is the thing signified in baptism. Our Lord makes this ordinance necessary to our entering into the kingdom of God; which imports at least, that as none can *really* enter that kingdom without being born of the Spirit; so none can *visibly* enter it without being born of water, nor indeed have they ground to think that they shall enter it in any sense, if they wilfully despise this ordinance, and throw contempt upon the authority of its Institutor.”—  
 —In a note this writer further says, “As to the *necessity* of baptism to salvation, it is no stronger expressed in these passages than in some others, concerning which there is no dispute; such as, “he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved,” Mark xvi. 16.—the like figure whereunto baptism doth also now save us,” 1 Pet. iii. 21. “Be baptized and wash away thy sins,” Acts xxii. 15. If it be said that the chief stress is here to be laid upon *believing*, and the *thing signified* in baptism,

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tism, the same may be said of the passages under consideration, without excluding baptism itself, which is evidently intended in them. Baptism cannot be necessary to infants, for whom it was never intended :—Christ requires no impossibilities.—It is not the mere want, but wilful contempt or neglect of it which condemns men ; for it is the *thing signified* which saves, &c.”

*Ans.* THIS ingenious author has, I think, mistaken the sense of the above cited texts, and lays also an unwarrantable stress on the ordinance of baptism.—The washing of regeneration *παλιγγενεσίας* Tit. iii. does not, in my opinion, signify baptism :—this word occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, but in Matt. xix. 28. where, I think, it cannot be meant of *water-baptism* :—the word properly means *born again*, a *new* or *second birth*, which *baptism with water* is not ; but *baptism with the Spirit* is really so ; as is evident from the *intire change* produced in him who is the subject of it :—he is a *new creature*.—Nor do I know of any *parallel text* where *baptismal water* is *figuratively called the washing of regeneration*. Both the expressions therefore in Tit. iii. are meant, I conceive, of the Holy Spirit, and denote a work of grace, begun and carried on by the Spirit in, and upon the minds and hearts of believers ; for I think it is evident that the apostles had a measure of the Spirit of holiness imparted to them, and were *regenerated* thereby,

thereby, through faith in the word of Jesus, which he had spoken to them, *before they were baptized with that same Spirit* on the day of Pentecost, when it was poured on them richly. Moreover, all God's elect need, and receive *abundance of grace*, in order to their complete salvation, according to Rom. v. 17.—The apostle perhaps might here also comprehend *the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit*, which in those days were commonly given to believers; whereby the testimony of Christ was confirmed in them.

2. NEITHER, in my opinion, do our Lord's words, John iii. 5. speak at all of water-baptism, though our author seems pretty confident to the contrary; much less do they declare its *necessity* prior to a believer's admission into the visible church or kingdom of God, under the gospel; see *Calvin's* opinion upon this text, as before cited in page 37.

BUT let us briefly consider the text as it stands in the evangelist.—Christ had said, ver. 3, “Except a man be *born again* he cannot see the kingdom of God:” *Nicodemus* supposing him to speak of a *natural* or carnal birth says, ver. 4. *how can a man be born when he is old? &c.* Christ answers, ver. 5. “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;” by which words he evidently meant the same thing as by being *born again*, ver. 3.—Then ver. 6. he replies to *Nicodemus's*



*carnal notion* of the *new birth*, and shews the weakness and folly of it; and, at the same time, declares more plainly what himself intended by it: for *that*, says he, which is born of the flesh, could it be repeated, would be flesh still, without any change for the better; but that which is born of the Spirit is *Spirit*; the man that was before *carnal*, becomes *spiritual*; but says nothing of water in his answer, nor does he mention it any more, but adds, ver. 7. *You must be born again*; and then, ver. 8. he illustrates this new birth by the *wind*, with regard to its *efficacy*; as with respect to its *purity*, he had before represented it by *water*; and then closes the subject with saying, "so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Upon the whole then it seems to me evident, Christ only mentions *water* and the *wind* as figurative representations of the purity and energy of the Spirit in the work of regeneration: and thus our Lord evidently resolves the *new birth* which he first spake of, into a being *born of the Spirit*, and nothing else; of which in its purifying influences, water is the common emblem, both in the Old and New Testament, see John vii. 38, 39. and in Isa. xlv. 3. he saith, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground;" and then adds, "I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed," &c. The latter phrase seems to me exegetical, or explanatory of the former, that is, by pouring of water is meant the pouring of the Spirit, as that which was signified by it, and so the phrase, being *born of*

of water, according to this view of the text, only means a being born of the Spirit.

NOR do I suppose that water-baptism gives any one a right to enter into the visible church of Christ, as Mr. *M<sup>c</sup>Lean* seems to think, for unless he have true faith in Jesus, he can be no member of Christ, and consequently has no right to the communion of saints at the Lord's supper, but he that has true faith in Christ, we are assured, is born of God, John i. 12, 13. and this *Philip* also plainly declared to the eunuch, when he said to him, *If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest*, Acts viii. for *with the heart man believeth unto righteousness*, Rom. x. and whoever enters into the visible church of Christ without this faith, is an intruder, and has no scripture warrant for it; and to such it will be said, when Christ, the King and Head of the church shall enter in to see the guests, *Friend how comest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment*; neither that of *righteousness imputed*, nor that of *holiness imparted*? His having been baptized with water will be no excuse for him—but every one who is regenerated or born of the Spirit has true faith in the Son of God, and therefore has a full scripture right to enter the visible church of God, and of Christ, and to eat of that bread and to drink of that cup which is the communion of the body and blood of Christ, and, as I conceive, an emblem also of his future sitting down *with all saints, at*  
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*the marriage-supper of the Lamb.*—Mr. M<sup>c</sup>Lean speaks of other texts about which he says there is no dispute, but I think he is mistaken. One of these is Mark xvi. 16. (that in Peter has been spoken to before) whatever be meant by baptism in this text, it seems *necessary to salvation*, for it is, I think, evidently understood in the last clause as if he had said, he that believeth not, and is not also baptized, shall be damned, for else why is it joined with faith, as that which saves us, in the first part of the text? but to understand it of being outwardly baptized with water will by no means agree with the plain doctrine of the New Testament, which constantly *ascribes our salvation to faith in Christ, as working by love, and overcoming the world*. Some therefore understand it of the baptism of the Spirit, which is properly that baptism wherewith Christ baptizes those who believe on him, to which the evidences of faith, mentioned ver. 17. properly belong; but (not wholly excluding those miraculous evidences, as commonly given to believers in the apostles days); I rather understand it of that which baptism primarily and eminently imports, and is undoubtedly necessary to salvation, and that is a *visible or public confession of Christ* before men, as we have it, Rom. x. the word or doctrine of faith which we preach, faith Paul, is this, *If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that GOD hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt*



*shalt be saved; for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation; which text, I think, rightly and properly answers to the words in Mark, He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.*—The Jewish rulers believed on Christ, but did not confess him, for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God; therefore their faith could not save them. It is not then being immersed or washed with water that saves believers, but their confessing Christ before men; and this Christ himself testifies, Matt. x. “Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven.” And thus, Rev. xii. the saints are said to overcome the wicked one and their cruel persecutors, *by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony*; which was their confessing of him, though they lost their lives for so doing: and he that thus confesses Christ is undoubtedly a believer in him, and is also baptized with the Holy Spirit, which God hath both promised and given to them that believe in, and obey him; but not to every one baptized with water. What Mr. M<sup>c</sup>Lean observes of being *born of water*, as being distinguished from being *born of the Spirit*; the same may be said of the *promise of pouring water and of the Spirit*, in Isa. xliv. But if we thus understand the prophet’s words as spoken of water, literally poured on God’s believing people, in distinction from the pouring of the Spirit upon them; then, I think, the text evidently declares that

that water was to be applied to believers under the gospel, not by *immersion*, but by *sprinkling* or *pouring*.—Nor do I think that baptism with water spoken of in the New Testament was at any time performed by dipping a person under water, but by applying water to him, either by pouring or sprinkling, as we have again and again observed already ; for, in my opinion, this *mode*, and *this only*, corresponds with the manner in which God promised to purify his people by water, under the gospel, as the scriptures of the prophets plainly declare, and testify : and if so, how greatly mistaken is Mr. M<sup>c</sup>Lean, (as well as Mr. Booth,) who will hardly admit any one to be a real subject of the kingdom of God and of Christ, unless he has been baptized by dipping under water ; for he seems to me to have scarce charity for any who neglect it, except *infants*, or persons *grossly ignorant* ; for where will he find those persons that really fear God, who *wilfully despise* any ordinance of Christ, which they believe he hath appointed, and that it is their duty to observe it, or that knowingly trample upon his authority, as he suggests ?

Obj. 7. “ If it be lawful to dispense with an appointment of God out of regard to our *weaker brethren*, we cannot reasonably think it unlawful to practise the appointments of our national church out of regard to the *ruling powers* ; *submission* to the latter being no less plainly required

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in scripture than *condescension* to the former." page 51.

*Ans.* I do not think it a *parallel case*, for the scripture doth no-where require the disciples of Christ to practise *rites* and *ceremonies* of *men's devising*; but it commands them to exercise *condescension* and forbearance towards each other in love, and to receive one another as Christ received them to the glory of God; therefore the case is not parallel.—But submission to *civil powers*, in all things which God hath commanded us in his word, is not only *lawful* but *necessary*; and where is the christian that doth it not?

Now as this submission to *civil rulers* is required of the christian for the honor of his religion, the peace of society, and the good of his neighbour; so forbearance and condescension to a christian brother supposed to be *mistaken*, or *weak in the faith*, is required of him, for the peace of the church, the edification of his fellow-faiths and brethren in Christ, and for the glory of God.

2. In all divine appointments where the performance of one ordinance interferes with that of another, so that both cannot be performed at the same time, then the *less* is always to give way to the *greater*; things *ceremonial* and *carnal*, to things *moral* and *spiritual*; and this, I think, is the doctrine both of the *Old Testament* and of



the *New*.—But the edification of the church and children of God is of much greater importance, and more for the glory of God than the *bare performance* of any *positive institution* whatever; for all *such ordinances* are appointed of God for the *use* and *benefit* of the *church* (else they had never been instituted) and not the *church* for *them*;—as our Lord said in a similar case; the *sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath*: therefore it is lawful to heal the sick, and do good on the sabbath-day; though in so doing, the sabbath be literally transgressed by it. But if both these divine commands cannot be performed together, but one or other must be omitted or broken by it, then God is most glorified by our observing the *former*, in preference to the *latter*; and so, I conceive, he is more glorified by *receiving* a true believer to the Lord's table, than by *rejecting* him, for want of baptism.

Obj. 8. “To dispense with the positive appointments of Jesus Christ, or to reverse his order of their administration in condescension to weak believers, and with a view to the glory of God, cannot be right.—God never gave power to any man to change his ordinances, or to dispense with them:—Dispense with a divine institution for the edification of weak believers!—Invert the order of God's appointments, and break his positive laws, with a view to his glory!—Theological paradoxes these!” p. 60, 61.

*Ans.*

*Ans.* THOUGH the preceding objection contains, as I conceive, little more than *mere* declamation, and *bare* charges without proof; yet I would soberly ask Mr. *Booth*, where he finds it said in all the scripture, that those who receive believers (though unbaptized) to the Lord's table, are guilty of breaking the *positive laws* of Christ?—It has been already observed that Christ himself instituted his *holy supper*, gave it to his *believing disciples*, with a *command to observe it in remembrance of him*, BEFORE the institution of *christian-baptism*, or having said a word to his apostles about it. How then can the advocates for free communion be chargeable with *breaking his positive laws*, or of *inverting* the order of Christ's appointments, *merely for receiving believers, as such*, to the Lord's table? Do they not rather imitate their Lord and Master in so doing, and copy after his example?—(so likewise the *Holy Spirit* was first given to the believing Gentiles, not *after baptism*, but *before it*.)—Our Lord also might thereby intimate that the ordinance of *breaking bread* was to be the *great and standing ordinance* of his church to the end of the world, and the other not;—for it is observable when (after his resurrection) he spake to his apostles concerning baptism, he did not deliver it to them by way of *express command*, as he had done that of breaking bread, for with respect to that he said, *Do this in remembrance of me*:—but as to baptism, he only gave them *instructions* concerning the *manner* of baptizing; that is, he bid them to

baptize believers in him, not as *John* did his disciples, but to baptize them *in the name of the FATHER, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit*; and hence perhaps, in Christ's commission to that chosen vessel Paul, (the great apostle of the Gentiles when he sent him to preach the gospel in all the world,) baptism was purposely omitted, for we do not find that he said a word to him concerning it.

It may be further noticed: Though *Paul* plainly tells us Christ sent him not to baptize, and, in my opinion, speaks but lightly of it, (yet that apostle, I doubt not, had more *true zeal* for the honor of God, and of his Christ than any minister now upon earth);—but when he speaks of the ordinance of the *Lord's supper*, he does it in a very different and solemn manner; for he expressly says, that he received it from the Lord Jesus, and delivered it to the church at Corinth, and consequently to all churches, even as he had received it from Christ himself; and then takes occasion to explain its *nature* and *importance*, and warns them of being *unworthy partakers*, through the abuse of it.—But he never spake after this manner, of baptism:—and here I observe that the people called *Quakers* do, in my opinion, err, and are very culpable in their total neglect of the *Lord's supper*;—for the express command of Christ for the observance of it, and the apostle's assuring



assuring us he delivered it to the saints, as he received it from the Lord Jesus, together with his directions and warnings concerning a *due* and *profitable* attendance on it, make it, I think, binding on all christians to be found in the practice of it. — “Do this, saith Christ, in remembrance of me.” — I did it, saith *Paul*, and have taught other saints to do it likewise.

2. YET it seems to me highly reasonable to suppose, that the WISEST and BEST of BEINGS (*who desireth mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offering*) should require his servants to pay a greater regard to things which are *spiritual* and *eternal*, than to those that are *temporary* and *carnal*. — But *theological paradoxes* are perhaps to be met with among *religious societies* in general; for who among us can say, *I am perfect in knowledge*?

MR. *M<sup>c</sup>Lean*, who seems to be as zealous a Baptist, and as sensible a writer as Mr. *Booth*, yet as to that precept of our Lord, concerning *washing one another's feet*, he doth, I suppose, widely differ from him. Mr. *M<sup>c</sup>Lean* expresses his astonishment that christians in general should live in the constant neglect of that command: — “It is, saith he, not more amazing than true, that the most of those who would be thought *real christians* pay no regard to the example and authority of Christ in this particular.” — Doth Mr. *Booth* himself obey this precept *in the letter* of  
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of it? if not, why doth he live in the neglect of it? for I do not find that Christ hath any where so *expresly commanded and enforced the ordinance of baptism*, as *that of washing one another's feet*: for he no-where says of baptism, *I have given you an example, that ye should be baptized as I have been, and happy are ye if ye do it.*—Mr M<sup>c</sup>Lean seems to think it so necessary a part of christian duty, as hardly to admit any one to be a *real christian*, who lives in the total neglect of it.—Thus we see great and good men have differed, and do differ, both in their *opinion and practice* concerning certain rites, &c. doth it not then behove us to follow after *charity*, forbearing one another in love?

3. NOR do I suppose it possible that God can be glorified in his church, as the God of our salvation, by Jesus Christ, but in the growth and edification of his people.—To set therefore the glory of God in *opposition to the edification of believers*, seems to me a *paradox* indeed, and highly absurd; for how can God be glorified in the church, by a zeal for any of his *positive ordinances*, when the church is not thereby edified?—nor are his ordinances *perverted*, or *unlawfully dispensed* with, when they are made subservient to his *people's edification*; but when they are so far urged, or insisted on, as to stumble, perplex, or hinder the edification of his people; they are, I think, abused, and made utterly void, as to the great and special end for which God hath appointed

appointed them:—wherefore let us receive one another as Christ received us to the glory of God; and if it be to the edification of his people, it must, I think, of necessity be to the glory of God.

*Obj.* 8. “DISOBEDIENCE to a plain, positive, known command, is justly classed with idolatry and witchcraft.” p. 62.

*Ans.* If Mr. *Booth* applies this to baptism, as I think he does, he seems here to consider all unbaptized persons (and in his judgment all *Pedo-Baptists* are so) as equally criminal with idolaters, and those who practice *magic* or *witchcraft*, consequently they must have their portion with them hereafter; especially as they seem to be here represented, not as erring through infirmity, but as sinning perversely and wilfully, in the face of a plain, positive, *known command*; so that they cannot plead ignorance by way of excuse for their error: but perhaps this was hastily written, and without due consideration; for Mr. *Booth* elsewhere allows that this ordinance is not essential to salvation, and if so, a person who lives and dies unbaptized may nevertheless be saved, but he that lives and dies an idolater cannot be saved, consequently believers, though unbaptized, cannot be *justly classed* with idolaters, &c.

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HERE we may observe how an *undue* zeal for carnal ordinances is sometimes productive of the most severe and *uncharitable* censure of a believing brother.—Our Lord gave to his disciples, as hath been already mentioned, a *plain, known, and positive* command to wash one another's feet.

HERE again I would ask Mr. Booth, if he himself is obedient to this *plain, known, and positive* command? If otherwise, ought he not to take heed to his Spirit, lest he incur the censure of that alarming text? *Thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest, for wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thyself, for thou that judgest dost the same things.*

PERHAPS it will be said, this command is not to be understood according to its literal, but moral signification; that is, to teach the disciples of Jesus humility, and a readiness to condescend to the meanest services, for the mutual help and relief of one another; and this, I doubt not, was one thing which our Lord intended by it. But Mr. M<sup>c</sup>Lean thinks it binding on all christians, and lays a considerable stress on the *literal* observance of it.—And here I would observe, that Mr. Sandeman, and those that follow him in this particular, are, I think, evidently mistaken, for this plain reason, and that the apostles have no where taught, or given a command to the churches of Christ to wash one another's feet,

feet, as an ordinance of the Lord Jesus; yet Christ had commanded them to teach those who should believe on him, to observe *all things*, whatsoever he had said unto them; but *THIS of washing one another's feet*, is *no-where found in any of their sermons, or epistles to the churches*. Now as the apostles were undoubtedly *faithful*, as well as able ministers of Christ; I think it necessarily follows that Christ did not *intend*, nor did his apostles understand him to *mean*, that the *washing of one another's feet*, was to be delivered to the saints as a command of Christ, or to be observed by them as an *ordinance* of the New Testament:—for else would not the apostles have done it *themselves*, and *taught others* to do the same?

Obj. 9. “THOUGH I am far, says Mr. Booth, from thinking that *baptism* came in the place of *circumcision*, as many of our Pedit-Baptist brethren suppose, yet that the *former* is equally necessary to communion at the Lord's table under the *christian æconomy*, as the *latter* was to every male *in order to partake of the Paschal feast*, and to unite in the *tabernacle service*, I am fully persuaded: nor is it my singular opinion; it has been the sense of the church in every age.”  
p. 64.

Ans. It will not follow because no *uncircumcised* person was permitted to eat of the *Passover*, that no *unbaptized* person should be permitted to partake of the *Lord's supper*, because the *unlawfulness* of the *latter* cannot be proved by

any *positive prohibition*, as was that of the *former*.  
 —The *uncircumcised* person was *expressly forbidden* to eat of the *Passover*, but the *unbaptized* person is no-where *expressly forbidden* to eat of the *Lord's supper*. It was the *prohibition* in the *former case* that made it unlawful; and surely nothing in the *latter* can render it unlawful, but an *express divine prohibition* likewise.—The apostles have no-where forbidden it, or so much as hinted in any of their epistles to the churches, that baptism was a *bar* to communion at the Lord's table; and as they undoubtedly taught by express word and precept, every thing necessary for the salvation of men; so likewise for the communion of saints: for it cannot be doubted but they taught them every thing that was *requisite*, and *profitable* for them to observe and do, according to the will of God:—but they have no-where prohibited a *true believer* from coming to the Lord's table, on any account whatever:—and *where there is no law, there is no transgression*.—Now it is that, and that alone which is written in the scriptures of truth: and not the *doctrines, traditions, or customs* of any particular church, or of professing christians at large, which is to be regarded by the followers of Christ, as *that* rule of our faith, and practice, which is *appointed* of God, and *profitable* to his saints.

FURTHER; If it be unlawful for unbaptized persons to come to the Lord's table, (and in Mr. Booth's opinion all Pedo-Baptists are unbaptized)



tized) then they are all guilty of *presumption*, or, at least, err through *ignorance*, when they come to the Lord's table, and so are unworthy partakers of it.—And if baptism be of the same importance under the gospel, and stands in the same relation to the Lord's supper, as circumcision under the law, with regard to the eating of the Passover, it is highly probable that God in his word would have plainly told us so; and not suffered his church, at least a very considerable part of it, to have continued ignorant of this matter, and persevered in a practice both *dishonorable* to God, and *hurtful* to his people.

*Obj.* 10. “ Though it be admitted that the edification of christians is of *great* importance, yet it must be allowed that the honor of our divine Sovereign is of *infinitely greater* importance.—If we are obliged in some cases to set aside an ordinance of divine worship, and to break a *positive* command in order that certain individuals may perform another *positive* injunction—the laws of Christ are not half so consistent as *Paul's* preaching.” p. 92.

*Ans.* I do not think that they who receive unbaptized believers to the Lord's table, break any of the *positive commands* of Christ, nor has Mr. Booth, in my opinion, proved that they do so.—The edifying of the saints, or *body* of Christ, is declared to be the great end for which Christ appointed ordinances, and gave ministers to his church,

church, and people, Eph. iv. and if *they* are edified, Christ is honored, and God is thereby glorified, in him.—Therefore his apostles, in condescension to the prejudices of their weak brethren among the Jewish believers, connived at their observing circumcision, and the carnal ordinances of their law, though they knew that believers in Christ could be in nothing profited by them, and that they had a tendency to deny the *atonement* of Christ, and *subvert* the *grace* of the gospel:—yea, even Paul himself circumcised believing *Timothy*. Wherefore? was it because he had a divine command for it? or that he supposed the ordinance was now pleasing to God? Certainly not. But he did it, as himself tells us, for the gospel's sake, in condescension to the weaknesses and prejudices of the Jews, if by any means he might save some of them; wherefore it appears, that, for the good of our neighbour we may do those things without a divine warrant, when God hath not expressly forbidden it; yet this same apostle afterwards would not suffer *Titus* to be circumcised.—Hence some may fancy that great apostle's conduct to be inconsistent, even as Mr. *Booth* seems to think the laws of Christ are; if Mr. *Booth* himself be not *consistent* and *right* in his opinion and practice.—But *wisdom is justified of her children*.

Obj. II. “We find indeed an instance or two of positive and typical rites giving way to natural necessities and moral obligations, when the

the performance of both was impracticable, as when *David* ate of the shew-bread, without incurring a divine censure, but we have no example of a positive ordinance being set aside in favor of any one's ignorance or prejudice against it.—That maxim of our Lord's, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice," is therefore totally inapplicable in the present case." p. 93.

*Ans.* Was it owing to *ignorance* or *prejudice* that the *children of Israel*, with *Moses* at their head, *neglected*, or *set aside* circumcision for the space of forty years in the wilderness? Certainly not; for they did it *knowingly*, which rather aggravates their fault, if it was one.

2. OUR Lord not only mentions the instance of *David* to stop the mouths of cavilling Pharisees, but he tells us likewise that the priests in the temple prophaned the sabbath, and are blameless; and this appears to have been an ordinary thing which attended their ministrations in the sanctuary, every seventh day.

3. WHAT *natural* or *moral necessity* can be more forcible to plead excuse for breaking or laying aside, for the present, a positive institution, than that which regards the spiritual support and salvation of God's people;—If thy brother be grieved with thy meat, then walkest thou not charitably;—and shall thy weak brother perish for whom Christ died?—I have known the grief of some of God's people, on their being  
refused



refused communion with their believing brethren, merely for want of immersion, productive of similar effects; therefore our Lord's words, above cited, are not, I conceive, totally inapplicable in the present case:—besides, to represent those persons who desire communion with the Baptist-churches, as being all *ignorant* or *prejudiced*, is, I conceive, not a *just* nor *charitable* representation of them.

*Obj.* 12. “It is freely allowed that a mistake which relates merely to the mode and subject of baptism, is comparatively small, but still while I consider the aspersion of infants as a human invention in the solemn service of God, I am bound to enter my protest against it.”  
p. 98.

*Ans.* As Mr. *Booth* himself is not required to practice the aspersion of infants; he may very *consistently* enter his protest against it, while, at the same time, he receives his believing brother, who in that SMALL point differs from him; for if it be but a *mistake* relating to the *mode* and *subject* of baptism, and that mistake *comparatively small*; the scripture, I think, warrants us, and Mr. *Booth* is bound by the scripture, to receive such mistaken believers into his communion, if they desire it; for whilst he protests against their sentiments, as to the mode and subject of baptism, yet he may receive their persons (though mistaken) as believers in Jesus; for  
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if Christ hath received them, surely Mr. *Booth*, as a servant of Christ, ought not to reject, but to receive them likewise. I, for my part, think *immersion* to be as much a *human invention*, as *infant sprinkling*; yet I dare not reject any one on that account, whom I consider and regard as a true believer in Jesus; as the Christ, and Son of the living God.

*Obj.* 13. "As there is but one God, and one faith, so there is but one baptism." p. 146.

*Ans.* THE scripture tells us there are *gods many*, but, at the same time, it testifies, to us there is but one GOD, even the FATHER, *of whom are all things*, 1 Cor. viii. 6. and *the scripture cannot be broken*.—Our Lord also plainly teaches us the very same, when speaking to his FATHER he said, "This is life eternal, to know thee the ONLY TRUE GOD, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent," John xvii. 3. If this be not the plain sense and doctrine of scripture, let Mr. *Booth*, if he be able, shew us the contrary; and so clear himself from that, which I conceive to be a *palpable inconsistency*, viz. of holding there is but one true God, that Christ is his *begotten* Son, and yet Christ is that very God, whose Son he is.—

2. Now as there is but one true God, so there is but one *true faith*, for else there are *faiths many*; but the true faith differs from them all,

all, both as to its *objects*, *operation*, and *end*; and is called therefore a *most holy faith*; the *faith* of God's *elect*:—its immediate object is Jesus, as the Christ and Son of God, and then God himself, even the FATHER, by him: “for he, saith Christ, that believeth on me, believeth *not on me*, but on HIM that sent me;” and so speaks his apostle *Peter* likewise, “by him (even Jesus) we believe in God, who raised him from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God.” 1 Pet. i. This true faith therefore, is not dead, without good works, but *living* and *operative*—it worketh by love, and *overcometh the world*;—neither is it *temporary*, or only for a season; but abiding, and continues even to the end of our lives: “for ye are kept, saith the apostle, by the power of God, *through faith*, unto salvation.”—And as there is but *one true God*, and *one true faith*, so there is but *one true baptism*:—we read indeed of more baptisms than one;—*John* baptized with *water*, but *Christ* baptized with the *Holy Spirit*. Now the question is, Which of *these* doth the apostle intend in the passage under consideration? Surely that which is *most excellent*; for can it be reasonably supposed, that the apostle, speaking of the *one true God*, and *one true faith*, as what are necessary to our salvation, should mention any baptism with them, but that which is *eminently excellent* above all other, and *necessary* to our *salvation* also. And here it may be observed likewise, that *baptism with water* is no more worthy,



thy to be mentioned with the *baptism* of the *Spirit*; than *John* himself was worthy to be mentioned with his great Lord and Master Jesus Christ, of whom he says, "He that cometh after me, is *preferred* before me,—the latchet of whose shoes *I am not worthy to unloose*." The *one baptism* therefore mentioned in Eph. iv. doth, in my opinion, most undoubtedly mean the baptism of the Holy Spirit; and agreeable to this sense of the passage, the apostle, in another place, speaking of *all the members of Christ in general*, says, "By *one Spirit* are we *all baptized into one body*."

*Obj.* 14. "AND does not the divinely prescribed form of words (Matt. xxviii. 19.) suggest arguments of unanswerable force against those anti-trinitarian errors which now so much abound." p. 126.

*Ans.* HERE Mr. *Booth* enters on a new subject, which, (if I were not under a peculiar restraint,) would probably have been considered pretty largely, for it is evident that these words do not so much as hint at the *mode* of baptism, or its *importance*, as a *term* of christian communion:—and I think it probable that the apostles never used them as a *prescribed form* in their manner of baptizing any one, but only took the *sense* of them; for it is observable, that those who are mentioned, as baptized, in the history of the

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Acts,

Acts, whether by the apostles or any other person, are always said to be baptized *in the name of the Lord Jesus*; and it does not appear from that divine history, they made use of any other form, but this only.

It is, I think, also evident from the context, compared with sundry other *scripture-passages*, what kind of *anti-trinitarian errors* this *prescribed form* of baptism doth PROPERLY oppose, and by "*arguments of unanswerable force*" refutes them all; which also seems to me plain from the very *ground and reason* of Christ's delivering this form, or *manner* of baptizing to his apostles, as himself had mentioned it, in the words immediately preceding; when he said, "*All power in heaven and earth is GIVEN to me, go ye therefore, &c.*" and in *Mark* it is said, "When he had spoken to them, he was received up into heaven, and sat *on the right hand* of God;" and in *Luke* he said, "Behold I send the *promise* of my FATHER upon you;"—and of THIS TRINITY he had spoken to them before, when he said, "I will *pray* the FATHER, and he shall give you another comforter, *even the Spirit of truth* which PROCEEDETH from the FATHER—he shall teach you all things."—These texts, I think, plainly shew what is the *true scripture Trinity*, and give the true reason also why believers in Christ, were directed to be baptized *into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit*; and they are all, as I conceive, contained and summed

up in this one form, made use of by the apostles, when they baptized *into the name of the Lord Jesus*;—for through *him* we all have access, by *one Spirit*, unto the FATHER, Eph. ii.—For God hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus; all which blessings are revealed and conveyed unto the *minds* and *hearts* of his believing people, by *the Spirit*; “for *the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.*” “Now we have received, saith Paul, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might *know* the things which are *freely* given to us of God.” Christ, therefore, said to his disciples—“It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come, but if I depart I will send him unto you.”—“He shall glorify me, for he shall take of *mine* and shew it unto you; all things that the Father hath are mine, therefore said I, he shall take of mine and shew it unto you.”—Thus it hath pleased *the Father* that in Christ should *all fulness dwell*.—Hence, I think, we may plainly learn what is the *true Trinity* that God has revealed in his word; and how widely it differs from every thing of that name, *devised* and *held* by men; whether *antient* or *modern*?

Obj. 15. “Him that is weak in the faith receive ye,—for God has received him,” Rom. xiv. 1—3.—“Receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God,” xv. 7. “These texts, saith Mr. Booth, do not so much



as *mention* the Lord's table, nor appear to have the least reference to it.—We are plainly informed that the persons intended were such as had not a clear discernment of their christian liberty, in regard to their *eating of meats* forbidden by the ceremonial law, and the *observation of days*, &c. but what has this to do with *free communion*? is there no way of receiving him that is weak in faith, but by admitting him to the Lord's table? “I commend unto you, says *Paul*, *Phebe* our sister, that ye receive her in the Lord.”—Was her admission to the holy table the principal thing that he desired of the believing Romans, on her account,” &c. p. 76.—“Receive ye one another as Christ also received us,” &c. “The apostle is not here speaking of *admission to church membership* at all; but, as there was some difference of opinion about meats, &c. which was like to break their communion together—the apostle sets himself to prevent this, and to accomplish a reconciliation.” p. 85.

*Ans.* ALTHOUGH those texts do not in *express words* mention the *Lord's table*, yet some of them seem to me to have a plain reference to it; for Mr. *Booth* himself allows that from their difference of opinion about meats, &c. their communion together was likely to have been broken; and the apostle sets himself to prevent this:—and doth not this plainly imply that their communion together at the Lord's table was likely to be affected by it? and that the  
apostle

apostle endeavoured to prevent this breach between them, by advising them to keep together in one communion, notwithstanding the difference of opinion which subsisted among them:—and the ordinance of *breaking bread* seems to be that which eminently signifies the *communion of saints*, in the *visible church*; for the bread, saith Paul, *that we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? for we are all partakers of that one bread*, 1 Cor. x.—besides; the apostle's reason for it, is, I think, applicable to all differences that ever did, or may arise between believers, in points *not essential to salvation*, whether it respect baptism, or any thing else; for it proceeds, and is *built on this ground only*, viz. *the person is a believer*, therefore receive him. And to receive *a believer in the Lord*, doth, I think, imply nothing less, *than to receive such a one to all the Lord's ordinances with themselves*, as a church of Christ; though on several other accounts, a believer or an apostle, may be said to be received by them.—Also, when Paul said, *I am made all things to all men*, it is doubtless to be restricted to things lawful; but what are things lawful? Those which God hath *not forbidden* in his word:—therefore as God has not forbidden any christian church to receive believers in the Lord to the holy supper, it is not *unlawful* to receive them, though they be not baptized; and they who think as the apostle Paul thought, and act as he acted;—in other words, are followers of him, as he was of Christ, will, I am persuaded, kindly and heartily receive

receive them, as he did; notwithstanding all their present *prejudices, mistakes, or weaknesses* in the faith, about rites, &c. or any thing not absolutely necessary to our salvation; and this appears to me evident from the plain drift of all his epistles, and from the whole of his *carriage, and exhortations* unto all the churches of Christ, in every place:—“for in the *new creation* there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond, nor free; but *Christ is all and in all*:” Col. iii. and they who exclude any of the saints from their communion, merely on the account of their differing from them about *baptism*, are, I think, included in those of the *concision*, Phil. iii. 2. for though it primarily related to certain believing Jews who urged *circumcision* as necessary to the salvation of *believing Gentiles*, and of their having *free communion with THEM*; yet as they cut off and exclude real believers from the church of Christ, it is justly applicable to them also. For this *legal unchristian* spirit and conduct, *Peter* was sharply reproved by *Paul*, at Antioch.

*Obj.* 16. “WE are commanded to receive one another—as Christ received us to the glory of God. Permit me to ask, says Mr. Booth, Whom does God, whom does Christ receive? None but those that believe and profess faith in the Lord Messiah? Our brethren will not affirm it. For if divine compassion to the dead in sin; if the kindness of Christ did not relieve the enemies of God; none of our fallen race would



would ever be saved. But does it hence follow that we must admit the unbelieving and the unconverted, either to baptism, or the holy table? Our gracious Lord freely accepts all that desire it, and all that come; but are we bound by his example, to receive every one that solicits communion with us?" p. 79.

*Ans.* Mr. Booth seems to me to have strangely mistaken, or misrepresented the *apostle's words*, where he says, *Receive ye one another, as God, and as Christ received us*; Rom. xiv. 1—3. xv. 7. for the apostle, in that place, says not a word about God's sovereignty, either in election, or in the exercise of grace for the *quicken*ing and converting of sinners, dead in trespasses and sins; but of receiving such, as were already quickened, converted, and believers in Christ, into fellowship with HIMSELF, and with his people. I marvel, therefore, that Mr. Booth should suppose his baptist brethren would be afraid to affirm that God receives none but the regenerated, and believers in Christ:—Will Mr. Booth venture to affirm that God receives the impenitent and unbelieving, whilst they continue in that state of sin and unbelief? I know not a text in all the scripture that says any thing like it. To *elect* and *quicken* dead sinners, are very different things from receiving them into communion with him. Surely, that God who is glorious in holiness, and of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, cannot commune with *unholy* souls, lying dead in trespasses and sins.

John

John says, "If we say we have *fellowship* with HIM, and walk in darkness; we lie, and do not the truth; but if we walk in the light, as HE is in the light, then, and not else, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."—And again another scripture says, "Come out from among them (*viz.* the idolatrous, impenitent, and unbelieving) and be ye separate, saith the LORD, touch not the unclean thing, and I will *receive* you," &c. Nor is it indeed possible that God, or Christ, can receive sinners into their communion, but as persons *re-generated*, and *obeying* the gospel;—for *what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? or what concord hath Christ with belial?* Here we see both *how* and *when* Christ *receives* sinners, *viz.* when they are converted, believe in him, or turn to God by him; and this he doth *before* they are baptized; therefore as Christ received us to the glory of God *without* and *before* baptism; so let true believers receive one another. This, I think, plainly shews what it is to receive saints as God receives them, *merely as believers*, declaring and evidencing themselves so to be; without any respect to *baptism*, or *circumcision*, or any carnal rite whatever.

It seems to me therefore, that every true believer in Christ, has a right to the privilege of breaking bread with all saints, and ought to be received

received *as such*, by every church of Christ under heaven.—Mr. *Booth* perhaps will say, we do not reject him as an *unbeliever*, but as *unbaptized*.—The apostle indeed says, Receive him because he has faith; but we, says Mr. *Booth*, do not think that the apostle *meant* he should be received into *church fellowship*, or communion with us, because he has not been baptized as we are, which *we* judge to be an *effectual bar* to any one's being admitted to communion with us. The believing candidate may reply, I am not clear that the gospel requires me to be baptized, as *previously necessary* to a participation of *that* ordinance; nor am I persuaded that *your mode of immersion* is *that*, which the scripture hath appointed. Is he *weak in the faith*? receive him, saith the apostle, because he has faith, and do not perplex him with *disputations* about points which are not clear, but *doubtful* to him. Mr. *Booth* will probably say, the point in question is so clear and manifest, that no one can be ignorant of it, but from a *perverse sense* of spirit, or that doth not *wilfully* shut his eyes, that he may not see it. The apostle bids us not to judge one another:—but perhaps some rash and *hasty spirit* will say, who can help judging in this case?—the *meek and patient* apostle replies, *we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves*. Hast thou more light, and stronger faith in this point? have it to thyself before God; but judge not, nor trouble the mind of thy weak brother, lest by judging



another thou shouldst, in the end, condemn thyself; receive him therefore as a fellow believer, in Christ Jesus. Mr. Booth indeed says, what the apostle has written in Rom. xiv. xv. has no relation to baptism, but to certain Jewish rites and differences about *meats* and *drinks*.—What then? It was likely to break their union and communion together in the church, as we have just before observed; and whatever has the like tendency ought, I think, to be considered in the same light; for the apostle's main argument to prevail with them to continue together was this, that they should regard each other, both the *strong* and the *weak*, as *believers* in Christ; and in other matters *bear with each other in love*, for the Lord's sake; and this, I think, will apply to *all differences among real christians*, which are *not essential to their salvation*; for else, I conceive, the apostle's argument would seem to be weak, and insufficient to prove *that* for which it was intended; for if any thing whatever, not of a *moral* nature, but barely *ritual*, might, and ought to separate or exclude believers from the Lord's table, the argument drawn *merely* from their being all *believers in Christ*, would have been *insufficient* to prevent the saints from separating from each other, about *non-essentials*. After all, Mr. Booth will probably say, *though a believer*, he is *unbaptized*, and therefore we cannot admit him among us without breaking the *order* of

of the gospel, and so offending, and dishonoring God thereby. How then shall this point be settled betwixt us?—God only can settle it. Let us then make our appeal to him.—Doth God receive this *weak* or mistaken believer, or doth he reject him? The apostle replies, in very *plain* terms, God *hath received him*. Is this true? The apostle himself is witness, God, saith he, hath received him, and we know that his testimony is true, and Mr. *Booth* himself cannot, and, I suppose, will not, presume to deny it.—God's receiving him then is a much greater proof of his having a right to the Lord's table, than any thing which the weak believer himself could say or do; in order to convince his brethren of his having a *divine right* to the holy table; for if *we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater*; and this, I think, ought to be admitted as the best and strongest evidence of his right to that gospel ordinance; for can any one reasonably suppose, that God would receive a person into communion with himself, and with his Son Jesus Christ, and continue to *visit*, and *bless* him; and at the same time, shut that person out of his house; and bolt the door against him?—or that he should bid any of his servants to refuse such a one admission into the church, or to expel him from it, merely for want of observing what some of his people call gospel *order*, and that without giving us the least intimation in his word, of this *seemingly* inconsistent, and very *extraordinary* conduct of his providence

dence towards his *believing* and *faithful* people — His wise and faithful apostle Paul tells us, Rom. xv. “the kingdom of God is not *meat* and *drink*, but *righteousness* and *peace*, and *joy* in the *Holy Spirit* ;” and adds, “he that in these things *serveth Christ*, is *acceptable* with God, and *approved* of men ; without mentioning a word about baptism, or any thing of the like carnal nature, and surely this apostle knew as well as any man living what are the things in which God chiefly delights, and whereby God is *most honored* and *glorified* ; and his *church edified* ; according therefore to Paul’s doctrine and opinion, all wise and good men, whom the divine word counts truly so, both ought to *receive*, and will *approve* of those whose *amiable* character he has given us in the words just quoted from him.—Now as God, himself doth actually receive the true believer and continues to keep up a *gracious communion* with him : and has not, at any time, forbid his most *approved*, and *faithful* servants either to deny his admission into his church when he shall desire it, or when admitted, to exclude him from it, merely for want of water-baptism, or any mistake concerning it ; who can reject him, and be guiltless ?—Let us all then, on whom the name of Christ is named ; not only *depart from iniquity*, but also follow after *peace with all men* and *beliefs*, without which *no man shall see the Lord* ;—for we are the *true circumcision*, and partakers of the *true baptism* likewise, who *worship* God in *the Spirit* ; and rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh.



A SUMMARY of the ARGUMENTS of *both parties* contained in the foregoing Sheets, on the SUBJECT, MODE, and IMPORTANCE of *Water-Baptism*.

# I. ON THE SUBJECT.

**I**NFANTS are supposed by many to be the subjects of baptism, from the words of our Lord, "Suffer little children to come unto me," &c. Mark x. 13—16. —Also from 1 Cor. vii. 14. "Else were your children unclean, but now are they *holy*." —From our Lord's commission to his apostles, "*Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, baptizing them,*" &c. Matt. xxviii. 19. —From the words of *Peter* in his first sermon to the Jews, "The promise is to you and to your *children*," Acts ii. —From the baptism of households, as that of *Lydia*, the *Tailor's*, &c. Acts xvi. —Likewise from its coming, as some suppose, in the place of *circumcision*, Col. ii. 11, 12.

*Answers.* MARK says not a word of the baptism of the children brought to Christ, but plainly tells us they were brought for a very different reason, not to be baptized, but that Christ might *pray* for them and *bless* them. Nothing therefore can be urged from this passage in favour of infant-baptism: see that text explained in

p. 13—15. of the preceding work——Nor does *Paul* say a word about the *baptism* of those children, whom he calls *holy*, 1 Cor. vii. 14. This text therefore affords not the least proof in support of it: see the text explained at large. p. 15—19.

OUR Lord's commission to his apostles, Matt. xxviii. requires them to *believe* first. This therefore contains no ground for infant-baptism: see that text well explained, p. 27, 28.—Nor does *that passage* in Acts ii. speak of *children* as in a state of infancy, but of their *offspring*, and of the *Gentiles*, that should believe on Christ, as they did: see the text explained, p. 29, 30.

NEITHER where households are mentioned, is there the least hint given us of infants being baptized among them: In the jailor's it is expressly said, "the apostle spake the word of the Lord to all that were in his house, and he rejoiced, believing in God with *all* his house;" consequently there were no infants *included* in his household: this therefore contains no proof of infant-baptism, p. 31, 32.

NOR do I find that the New Testament gives us any reason to believe that *baptism*, under the gospel, came in the place of *circumcision* under the law; or that the offspring of *believing* parents, have any more right to baptism than those of unbelievers: see p. 20—23. 37, 38.

Nor

NOR does it appear from scripture, or experience that those children who are baptized in their infancy, are the *better* for it; or that those who are not so baptized are at all the worse, for the want of it.—It is the express doctrine of the church of England that *repentance* and *faith* are required of those that come to be baptized, and yet, strangely inconsistent with herself, she *denies* in her *practice* what with her *mouth* she *professes* to believe.—The substitution of *sponsors* is evidently a human invention, having nothing in scripture to warrant, or support the practice of it. p. 11—13.

WE often read in scripture of the baptism of *adult persons*, both men and women; but never that of infants—though children, on other occasions, are several times mentioned in the New Testament; yet when baptism is the subject they are not so much as once mentioned. As then there is neither *precept* for it, nor *example* of it, in all the New Testament, infant-baptism cannot be warranted, nor supported from the word and authority of God; but from the teaching, and authority of men only.

## II. ON THE MODE OF BAPTISM.

THE chief arguments brought by the advocates for *immersion*, as the true *mode* of baptism, are, I think, these:

### I. FROM



1. FROM Matt. iii. Mark i. "Jesus was baptized by John in *Jordan*:" see these texts explained, p. 45—48.

2. FROM John's baptizing in *Enon*, because there was *much water* there, John iii. see p. 50—52.

3. FROM Acts viii. "They went down *into* the water *both* Philip and the *Eunuch*, and he baptized him, see this text explained p. 48—49.

4. FROM Rom. vi. 3. and Col. ii. 12. where they tell us, baptism is declared to be a *resemblance* of the *burial* and *resurrection* of Christ; explained at large, p. 53—57.

5. FROM the *leading sense* of the word *baptize* which they say properly signifies to dip or *plunge into* or rather *under* water; see p. 57—63.—82—85.—As to the supposed *antiquity* of the custom, we have nothing to do with it, any further than it can be proved from scripture, to have been the practice of *John*, and the *apostles* of Christ.

ANSWERS and arguments against *immersion*, as the mode of baptism.

1. NONE of the texts above mentioned plainly say that the persons baptized were dipped under water, nor does it *necessarily* follow that they were so, from any of the *circumstances* attending their baptism,

baptism ; and as the scripture does not expressly declare it, *we* have no *divine warrant* either to *say*, or *believe* it.

2. CHRISTIAN baptism, as a *sign*, represents the washing away of our sins by the blood of Christ, &c. but this agrees with no figure of it under the law, but that of *sprinkling* only. see p. 78, 79.

3. THIS further appears from the *scriptures* of the *prophets*, who plainly declare that Christ, under the gospel, should *sprinkle* many nations ; and that God would *cleanse* and purify his people by *sprinkling clean water* upon them : but he nowhere speaks of their being dipped, or plunged into water, for that purpose. p. 76, 77.

4. BECAUSE *blood* and *water*, the types and shadows of spiritual blessings, are, by a mode of sprinkling, constantly represented as *applied* to believers ; but never that the *believers themselves*, the subjects of this grace, were *applied* to them ; thereby signifying, as I suppose, that the application of their *realities* for the purging and purifying of God's people from sin, and all uncleanness ; was not *of themselves*, but *of God*.—But *immersion* seems to deny all this, and doth, as it were, teach professors to take the *manner* of *applying* spiritual blessings to themselves, *out of God's hands, into their own* ; and thereby to *invert* and set aside the *wise*, and *gracious order* of God in his *application* of spiritual blessings unto his

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people:

people:—hence it seems to me reasonable to suppose that the *subject* in baptism should not be *applied* to the *water*, but the *water* to the *subject*; because this had ever been God's way of applying the *types* and *signs* of spiritual blessings to his believing people of old, and he hath promised, by his *holy prophets*, that *in the last days*, he would in the *same manner* cleanse them, under the gospel. p. 76—79.

5. BAPTISM by *sprinkling*, and not by *immersion*, is, I think, plainly signified in 1 Cor. x. see p. 72, 73. also in Heb ix. see p. 65, 66.—That *baptizo* likewise is used, to express, not *corporal immersion*, but a partial or *slight washing of the hands*, as a *religious rite*, or *ceremony* of the Jews, before eating; seems to me plain from Matt. xv. Mark vii. Luke xi. see p. 83.

6. BECAUSE the word *bapto*, which properly signifies to dip, is not so much as once used to denote the ordinance of baptism, which, I think, plainly intimates that *baptizo* is not used by the sacred writers to express an act of *dipping*, but rather that of *washing* and *sprinkling*; and therefore also they are carefully *distinguished*, as words of *different import*, *throughout the scripture*; see p. 57—63.

7. JOHN's *supposed* manner of baptizing by *immersion*, &c. is without a *precedent*, or any *resemblance* of it, either in the *law* of Moses or the *prophets*.—Moses and the *priests* were com-  
manded



manded to *purify* the people, not by plunging them in water, but by the *sprinkling* of blood and water upon them ;—and is it probable that John should dip persons under water, both *men* and *women*, and that in the most public places, without the least intimation from scripture, whether their bodies had any covering on them, or not ? or assigning any reason for this hitherto *unknown practice* in God's worship ; p. 92, &c.—the baptism of the Spirit is also expressed by the same word *baptizo*, and this, I think, leads us to its true meaning, as it was used, and intended it should be understood, by the apostles ; now the baptism of the Spirit was by *pouring*, &c. and as pouring the Spirit on a believer, is baptism with the Spirit ; certainly pouring water on him, is baptism with water, p. 84, &c.—As then there is no *express command* for dipping a person under water in baptism, nor any certain *example* of it in all the bible ; I look upon it as much a *human invention*, as that of infant-sprinkling ; neither of them have, in my opinion, any divine warrant, or foundation for it, in the word of God.

### III. ON THE IMPORTANCE OF WATER-BAPTISM.

**H**ERE a great stress is laid by Mr. Booth, on the supposition, that the apostles admitted none but baptized persons to the Lord's table :—answered p. 117, 118.—and that to receive unbaptized persons among them, is breaking the *order* of

of the gospel, and the *positive laws* of Christ; and further, that it has been always the *custom* of the church to receive none to the Lord's table without baptism, &c. To this it is replied, we know of no positive law of Christ that is broken by it; nor order of the gospel that is thereby changed, or made void.—God hath no-where *forbidden* a believing man, for *want of baptism*, to be received into his church; but, on the contrary, he himself receives them, and hath set his people an example to do the same.—Let us then, as many as are of the household of faith, be *imitators of HIM* as his dear *children*; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and given himself for us:—To whom be glory, and dominion for ever. Amen.

F I N I S.

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Books published by the Author.

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